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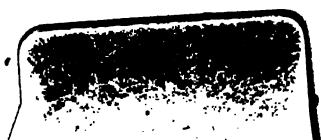
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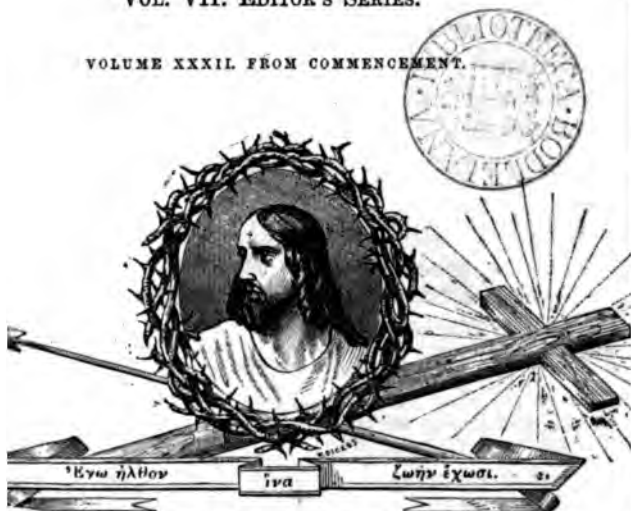
CONDUCTED BY

DAVID THOMAS, D.D.,

OF THE "BIBLICAL LITURGY," "PHILOSOPHY OF HAPPINESS," "GENIUS
THE GOSPEL," "COMMENTARY ON ACTS OF THE APOSTLES," ETC.

VOL. VII. EDITOR'S SERIES.

VOLUME XXXII. FROM COMMENCEMENT.



'THE LETTER KILLETH, BUT THE SPIRIT GIVETH LIFE.'—Paul.

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MPKIN, MARSHALL, AND CO.,
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1873.

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N.B.—*The next Volume, the Eighth of the Editor's Series, will, it is hoped, contain, in addition to the various sections of the present one, Articles on THE CHRISTIANITY OF SHAKESPEARE, which have been hitherto unavoidably postponed.*

PREFACE.

THIS Volume, the THIRTY-SECOND of the entire Work, is the *seventh* of the *New Series*—THE EDITOR'S SERIES.

Although considerably upwards of ONE HUNDRED THOUSAND VOLUMES have been sold, it will be gratifying for our friends to know that the demand is as great as ever.

As the old key-note will still rule the melodies of the HOMILIST, and no new specific description is requisite, the former Preface may be again transcribed.

First: The book has *no finish*. The Editor had not only not the time to give an artistic finish to his productions, but not even the *design*. Their incompleteness is *intentional*. He has drawn some marble slabs together, and hewn them roughly; but has left other hands to delineate minute features, and so polish them into beauty. He has dug up from the Biblical mine some precious ore, smelted a little, but left all the smithing to others. He has presented "germs" which if sown in good soil, under free air and an open sky, will produce fruit that may draw many famishing spirits into the vineyard of the Church.

Secondly: The book has *no denominationalism*. It has no special reference to "*our body*" or to "*our Church*." As denominational strength is not necessarily *soul* strength, nor denominational religion necessarily the religion of humanity, it is the aim of the HOMILIST to minister that which universal man requires. It is for man as a citizen of the universe, and not for him as a limb of the sect.

Thirdly: The book has *no polemical Theology*. The Editor—holding, as he does, with a tenacious grasp, the *cordial* doctrines which constitute what is called the "orthodox creed"—has, nevertheless, the deep and ever-deepening conviction, first, that such creed is but a very small portion of the truth that God has revealed, or that man requires; and that no theological system can fully represent all the contents and suggestions of the great Book of God; and, secondly, that systematic theology is but means to an end. *Spiritual morality is that end*. Consequently, to the *heart* and *life* every Biblical thought and idea should be directed. Your systems of divinity the author will not disparage: but his impression is, that they can no more answer the purpose of the Gospel, than *pneumatics* can answer the purpose of the atmosphere. In the case of Christianity, as well as the air, the world can live without its scientific truths; but it must have the free flowings of their vital elements. Coleridge has well said, "Too soon did the doctors of the Church forget that the heart—the moral nature—was the beginning and the end, and that truth, knowledge, and insight, were comprehended in its expansion."

The Editor would record his grateful acknowledgments to those free spirits of all Churches, who have so earnestly rallied round him; to the many who have encouraged him by their letters, and to those, especially, who have aided him by their valuable contributions. May the "last day" prove that the help rendered has been worthily bestowed; and that the HOMILIST did something towards the spiritual education of humanity, in its endeavour to bring the Bible, through the instrumentality of the pulpit, into a more immediate and practical contact with the every day life of man!

DAVID THOMAS.

Holly Bush, Loughborough Park,
London.

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NOTICES OF THE PRESS.

"Without copying Robertson of Brighton, there is a prevailing spirit in this publication which perpetually reminds you of his sublime utterances. Dr. Thomas is a man of a spirit so profound and comprehensive, so catholic and charitable, that the HOMILIST could not be other than that which it is. For the man always underlies the book which he writes. The HOMILIST is so rich in exquisite utterances that the attempt at quotation in this notice would be to commence illimitable enlargement. On the whole, we have two things to remark in connection with this publication—viz., first, that the HOMILIST is the best preacher's annual which we know; second, the last volume is the best of the twenty-six which it concludes, being, indeed, the commencement of a new series. We do not highly laud when we affirm that in the department of religious literature to which it belongs, it has no worthy competitor."—*Dundee Daily Advertiser*.

"That the author is fully equal to the discussion of such topics, few who are acquainted with his qualifications will presume to deny. He is evidently a man of refined taste and cultivated intellect. He has rendered high service to the cause of truth as an expositor and a critic. There are passages which, for richness of imagery and choiceness of rhetoric, have scarcely been surpassed. The very significance and symbolism of language seems to be exhausted in the elegant structure of many of these nervous and inspiring paragraphs."—*Church Standard*.



Glances at the Future: *A New Year's Address.*

“The land of far distances” * (authorised version, “Land that is very far off”).—Isaiah xxxiii. 17.

THESE words foretell that Israel will yet “see the land of promise cleared of enemies as far as the eye can see or the foot can carry, restored to Israel without reserve, and under the dominion of the predicted sovereign enjoying all the blessedness of peace.” Thus in addition to the hope of national and moral prosperity, the scenery of the fatherland became one inspiring joy.

We may naturally here remark the general influences of scenery. More than many think, but not more than most have sometimes felt, we are elevated or depressed, enervated or braced, by the effect of the landscape about us. Whilst the tame fens and lowlands enfeeble and restrain the imagination, and so often unconsciously depress man's spirit, he who is familiar with the mountain height and with the untold glories of the far reaching landscape and the rolling sea, has felt a baptism of new life and liberty in the breeze that fanned his brow, the grandeur that met his eye and challenged his mind and heart to buoyancy and higher life.

* This is not only the marginal reading, but has the authority of Delitzsch, and others.

This, warranted by the analogies between Israel's national and our individual experience, leads me to connect with the text this thought: *that a man's spiritual scenery has similar influence upon his nature.* It is so manifestly in the one matter of *Time*. In his view of it, his thoughts and emotions with regard to it, his outlook on it, he will either be depressed or enervated, as he is hemmed in and curtailed by the things that are seen and temporal, and by the hazy and often gloomy boundary of death; or else he will be elevated and exhilarated as his range of vision is wider and longer, comprehending the unseen and eternal, and looking beyond mortality into "the land of far distances." Every New Year's Day is for every thoughtful man an outlook on Time. Shall it be ours only to scan the probabilities of a year, or of a few years that will all soon lie in the grave where yesterday 1872 was buried; or shall it be ours to seek to gaze into Eternity itself, and into the spiritual facts and duties that belong to the everlasting as well as to the present? Shall your outlook this morning be bounded by the things of the body, of commerce, of the home, of your mortal life, or will you seek what eye hath not seen, or ear heard, or the heart conceived, but what the Spirit of God will reveal? Do you ask what are the waving outlines of this "land of far distances" that begins directly a man begins to live a Christly life, and that stretches away after death into the Infinite? I answer, Unending Existence; Undecaying Activity; Unfettered Thought; Unbounded Affections.

I. *Unending Existence.* He may well be sad at heart who feels death to be the limit of his life—life, a short pathway up to the impassable Mountain of Extinction—life, a little island girdled with the dark sea of mortality—life, a flickering light extinguished by the "last grand rush of darkness," death. Such thoughts the Christ-

taught and the Christ-loving need not hold in the hollows of the heart. For not only is the near and ever-nearing barrier of death abolished, but every limit that might be imagined as afterwards hindering or bounding life is removed in the Lord's prediction, "Neither can they die any more, being on a par with the angels." Many a thinker considers it has been demonstrated that mind as a simple and indestructible substance *must* live for ever. Every Christian disciple believes that the very life of the Eternal Christ is pledged for theirs in His assurance to His Christly followers—"because He lives they shall live also." Man is destined to go on in company age after age with the self-existent One. To help us to understand this duration of endless life, Isaac Taylor suggests we should "seek to conceive the human foot as having to tread the zodiac of the universe." What ought to be the influence of this far-reaching spiritual scenery on man's life! How it should enlarge his hopes, lessen his cares, by making his horizon sublime, whatever may be the stony sterility of the spot on which he stands.

"How shalt thou bear the cross that now
So dread a weight appears?
Keep quietly to God, and think
Upon the eternal years.

"Brave quiet is the thing for thee,
Chiding thy scrupulous fears;
Learn to be real from the thought
Of the eternal years.

"Pass not from flower to pretty flower:
Time flies, and judgment nears;
Go! make thy honey from the thought
Of the eternal years.

"Death will have rainbows round it seen
Through calm contritions' tears,
If tranquil hope but trims her lamp
At the eternal years."—*Faber*.

II. *Undecaying Activity.* One of the limits to our purpose and plan and hope, both in self-advancement and in blessing others, is the weakening of our bodily and mental powers. They are exhausted by weariness, they decay in disease and death. So we are hemmed in concerning many a holy and loving enterprise. Our work here is bounded by many things. (1.) There is the *finishing of the enterprise*. Our self-chosen tasks are often so small that we, by-and-by, complete them, and when they are completed we fold our hands in lethargy. Our outlook did not command the needs of many, nor perhaps the deepest needs of one, and so we came to an easy end of the enterprise, and drifted into unused days or years. There are not a few of such whose "Rest and be thankful," cut on some low cliff, is a self-uttered reproach. Our work is often hindered and ended. (2.) There is the *failure of our powers*. There are those who once worked and who would work now but they cannot. Instead of working they weep, for bodily health is wasted, mental vigour is impaired. All around them are fields of thought they would tread, wastes of want they would cultivate, but memory is shaken, or nervous power has gone. And though it be true

"They also serve who only stand and wait,"

such sufferers find it an infinitely keener trial to wait than the robust find it to be driven even to overwork. Another limit to work here is, (3.) There is the *ceasing of inclination*. Sometimes fuel has not been added to fire of flickering motive; sometimes fellow-workers have been cold, unwelcome, or harshly discouraging; sometimes repeated failure and mocking disappointments have driven a man back from seeking his own higher education or the world's welfare, and "desire ceases," and there is an end of work. But in contrast with all this that is of the earth earthy, the true worker for himself and for

others, yearns after and will inherit "a land of far distances." There the work will never be completed, for a universe is the sphere of labour, eternity is the period, and the infinite the problem. Labour—the putting forth of power: sacrificial labour—the putting forth of power in the spirit of the Lamb, who is the central life of the heavenly world; this is the far-reaching hope of every Christly soul. And this without the decay of powers, for then will be fulfilled the promise of perpetual morning dew, immortal youth, a world without pain, and never needing a night. Nor will want of inclination bring these occupations to an end, for there is realised the full power of the quenchless inspiration of love to the Lamb who was slain. So, for our highest, noblest labours, there is a limitless hope.

III. *Unfettered thought.* For the inquirer this human life is not "a land of far distances." Thinkers often weep in their sense of mental poverty: "we are of yesterday, and know nothing." The effort to solve many a problem about God and His universe is but the beating of our en-caged life against the iron bars of the knowable. Even in our most hopeful moods we feel we "are only stammering out alphabets and lisping the first syllable of a never-ending song." But we are to believe in the lifting of veil after veil as we go on through the ages, till the fair face of Truth shall be seen in Divinest Beauty. We may have to ascend many a hill, to climb many a mountain, and as we journey onwards to confess "it doth not yet appear what we shall be." A remote millennium may hear us saying, as we say this New Year's morning, "It doth not yet appear what we shall be." But our expectation is this, that with such scope, as well as claim for unfettered thought, our minds will know a life and a liberty of which we cannot now dream, for it will be the life and the liberty of "a land of far distances."

IV. *Unbounded affections.* More than can now be said, in number and in massiveness, are the obstructions to love. We through selfishness so unloving, men through sin so unlovable, God through our ignorance so little known—love is indeed with us a little island in a winterly sea. But “there shall be no more sea.” The island shall become a far-reaching continent, “a land of far distances,” heart shall have access to heart, and the human a deepening knowledge of the Divine. So love shall be perfect. And, brothers, if ye, time-bound with narrow and gloomy outlook, yearn for this unending life, this undecaying activity, this unfettered thought, this perfect love, hear Him who says, “I am the way.” Rightly knowing, trusting, loving, and following Him, we may “go forth to meet the shadowy future without fear and with a manly heart.” Whatever shadows necessarily rest on “the time to come,” the future which Christ reveals and offers to man is an ever-widening sphere for the highest and most blessed life. Therefore, He, knowing our needs, does with wondrous love say to us, “Believe in Me;” “Follow Me.” Listen now to that Divine Voice. Then as the Jews on New Year’s Eve greet each other with their familiar salutation, “May you be writ to a good New Year,” and respond with their familiar reply, “Ye also”—holding that before the dawn of New Year’s Day all pious men are registered in the Book of Life—we who believe that all true Christians “have their names written in the Lamb’s Book of Life,” may, with tones tremulous with tenderness and yet buoyant with hope, greet one another with the prayerful salutations, “May you be writ to a good New Year,”—“Ye also.”

Bristol.

URIJAH R. THOMAS.

Homiletic Sketches on the Book of Psalms.

Our Purpose.—Many learned and devout men have gone *philologically* through this **TEHELIM**, this book of Hebrew hymns, and have left us the rich results of their inquiries in volumes within the reach of every Biblical student. To do the mere verbal *hermeneutics* of this book, even as well as it has been done, would be to contribute nothing fresh in the way of evoking or enforcing its Divine ideas. A thorough **HOMILETIC** treatment it has never yet received, and to this work we here commit ourselves, determining to employ the best results of modern Biblical scholarship.

Our Method.—Our plan of treatment will comprise four sections:—(1.) The **HISTORY** of the passage. Lyric poetry, which the book is, is a delineation of living character; and the key, therefore, to unlock the meaning and reach the spirit of the words is a knowledge of the men and circumstances that the poet sketches with his lyric pencil.—(2.) **ANNOTATIONS** of the passage. This will include short explanatory notes on any ambiguous word, phrase, or allusion that may occur.—(3.) The **ARGUMENT** of the passage. A knowledge of the main drift of an author is amongst the most essential conditions for interpreting his meaning.—(4.) The **HOMILETICS** of the passage. This is our main work. We shall endeavour so to group the Divine ideas that have been legitimately deduced, as to suggest such thoughts, and indicate such sermonising methods, as may promote the proficiency of modern pulpit ministrations.

Subject.—The Prayer of Revenge.

“Plead my cause, O Lord, with them that strive with me;
Fight against them that fight against me.
Take hold of shield and buckler,
And stand up for mine help.
Draw out also the spear,
And stop the way against them that persecute me:
Say unto my soul, I am thy salvation.”—Psalm xxxv. 1—3.

HISTORY.—This Psalm is entitled a “psalm of David,” and there is no reason to question its authorship. The occasion of its composition remains a matter of speculation rather than of certitude. By some it has been referred to the time of the persecution of David by Saul; by others to the opposition which he encountered from Ahithophel, or Shimei, or to the ingratitude of Mephibosheth (2 Sam. xvi. 3); by others it has been referred to the rebellion of Absalom; and others have referred it to the Messiah, as prophetically descriptive of what would occur to Him. The last supposition is simple blasphemy. There is nothing of the spirit of Christ in this psalm; it is eternally antagonistic to the teachings of His sermon on the Mount and to the tenour of His whole life. This poem burns with vengeance from beginning to end.

ANNOTATIONS.—Ver. 1.—“*Plead my cause, O Lord, with them that strive with me; fight against them that fight against me.*” The real meaning of this is—Oppose my opposers, devour my devourers, strive with my strivers, contend with my contenders, damn my enemies !

Ver. 2, 3.—“*Take hold of shield and buckler, and stand up for mine help. Draw out also the spear, and stop the way against them that persecute me: say unto my soul, I am thy salvation.*” This means—Come forth as a mighty warrior against mine enemies : seize the twofold instruments of war, the defensive and the aggressive ; not only take the shield and the buckler to ward off the blows of the enemy, but “draw out the spear” and plunge it into his heart.

ARGUMENT.—“The whole Psalm,” says Alexander, “may be divided into three parts, parallel to one another, in all of which the elements combined are complaint, prayer, and the promise of thanksgiving for anticipated deliverance. The first division is occupied with an invocation of divine judgments on God’s enemies, ending with an expression of triumph in God’s favour (ver. 1—9). The second contains a more particular description of these enemies, as oppressors, false accusers, unthankful renderers of evil for good, and malignant scoffers, with a prayer for the divine interposition, and a pledge of public thanksgiving (ver. 10—18). The third renews briefly the description of the enemy, but is chiefly filled with prayer to be delivered from them, and closes, like the others, with a promise of perpetual thanksgiving (ver. 19—23).”

HOMILETICS. Homiletically, the whole Psalm may be regarded as a specimen of *revenge in prayer*. Revenge in *itself* is a bad thing. “Revenge,” says Bacon, “is a kind of wild justice, which the more man’s nature runs to, the more ought law to weed it out: for as for the first wrong, it doth but offend the law, but the revenge of that wrong putteth the law out of office. Certainly, in taking revenge, a man is but even with his enemy; but, in passing it over he is superior, for it is a prince’s part to pardon: and Solomon, I am sure, saith, ‘It is the glory of a man to pass by an offence.’”

Our philosopher here speaks not strongly enough concerning the moral vileness of this passion: it is essentially opposed to the true progress of the soul, the well-being of the universe, the character of Christ, and the spiritual laws of God. But *revenge in prayer* is revenge in its worst form. It is the devil going into the very presence of God, “Satan standing up before the Lord.” Men think that because a thing is

called a prayer it is good, but this is a sad mistake. As some of David's social acts were bad, and some were good, some of his conversation corrupt and some pure, so some of his prayers were excellent and some vile. What is there in the prayer before us to admire? Little or nothing; but much that is reprehensible and revolting. The whole Psalm suggests many remarks concerning revenge in prayer. It is presumptuously cowardly, utterly merciless, arrogantly impious, and basely egotistic.

I. It is **DESPICABLY PRESUMPTUOUS**. Here, Revenge, instead of confronting the enemy, and dealing out vengeance with its own hands, cringes before the Almighty and invokes Him to do the miserable work. "Draw out also the spear." How *cowardly* this! John Foster reminds us of a Spaniard, who, being injured by another inhabitant of the same town, resolved to destroy him: the other was apprised of this, and removed with the utmost secrecy, as he thought, to another town at a considerable distance, where, however, he had not been more than a day or two before he found that his enemy also was there. He removed in the same manner to several parts of the kingdom, remote from each other; but in every place quickly perceived his deadly pursuer was near him. At last he went to South America, where he had enjoyed his security but a very short time before his relentless pursuer came up with him and accomplished his purpose. There is something like intrepidity as well as force of purpose in such a manifestation of revenge, but in prayer there is nothing but craven-heartedness. How *presumptuous*, too! Who is appealed to? A heartless Moloch? No: One Who has declared He has no pleasure in the death of a sinner: One Who is long-suffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish: One Who has revealed Himself as merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness: One Who so loved the whole human world as to give His only begotten Son for its restoration: One Who has declared that whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer: One Who has said, "If thine enemy hunger, give him bread; if he thirst, give him to drink, for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of

fire on his head, and the Lord will reward thee." How appalling the presumption of the man burning with revenge appealing to God to destroy his enemies, invoking Infinite Love to become the executioner of our malicious passions!

"Speak not of vengeance! 'tis the right of God.
 'Vengeance is His.' Who will usurp the bolt;
 And launch it for omnipotence? Shall man
 Assume the right of judgment, or prescribe
 How far the line of mercy shall extend,
 Or punishment shall stretch its iron rod?
 In thine own cause to judge, who gave thee right,
 Presumptuous man?"—*C. P. Layard.*

Homiletic Sketches on the Book of Job.

The Book of Job is one of the grandest sections of Divine Scripture. It has never yet, to our knowledge, been treated in a purely Homiletic method for Homiletic ends. Besides many learned expositions on the book found in our general commentaries, we have special exegetical volumes of good scholarly and critical worth: such as Drs. Barnes, Wemyss, Mason Goode, Noyes Lee, Delitzsch, and Herman Hedwick Bernard: the last is in every way a masterly production. For us, therefore, to go into philology and verbal criticism, when such admirable works are available to all students, would be superfluous, if not presumption. Ambiguous terms, when they occur, we shall of course explain, and occasionally suggest an improved rendering: but our work will be chiefly, if not entirely, Homiletic. We shall essay to bring out from the grand old words those Divine verities which are true and vital to man as man in all lands and ages. These truths we shall frame in an order as philosophic and suggestive as our best powers will enable us to do; and this in order to help the earnest preachers of God's Holy Word.

Subject.—Job's reply to Bildad. (2.) His language about the Eternal. (a.) Concerning the fleetness of life.

"Now my days are swifter than a post:
 They flee away, they see no good.
 They are passed away as the swift ships:
 As the eagle that hasteth to its prey."—Job ix. 25, 26.

EXEGETICAL REMARKS.—*Vcr.* 25.—"*A post.*" A courier. In Persia couriers were employed, sometimes on foot, sometimes on dromedaries, to carry the royal mandates to distant provinces. Dromedaries are more

fleet than the fleetest horses ; it is said they have been known to run 150 miles in twenty-four hours. It is also said that an Arab on foot can keep up with a horse in full gallop. "*Swifter than a post*"—a runner, as Dr. Bernard and Elzas say : *i.e.*, the fleetest runner. "*They flee away, they see no good.*" I have no happiness, my life is misery.

Ver. 26.—" *They are passed away, as the swift ships.*" Margin, "ships of desire" or "ships of Ebeh." The reference probably is to ships laden with precious but perishable fruits, and therefore requiring haste in order to reach their destination. "The supposition of an allusion to any boat or vessel under full sail, will be in accordance with the language here, though the probability is that the reference is to the light vessels, made of reeds, that might be propelled with so much fleetness. Sails were frequently used also for such vessels." Ships longing for their destined port, and crowding all their sail to reach it. "*As the eagle that hasteth to its prey.*" The eagle is a bird of swift flight, but never so fleet as when it follows and pounces upon its prey.

HOMILETICS. The subject of these words is a very trite one, often referred to in every man's life, frequently preached upon by every preacher of every age and land. It wails through all history, and beats out its dolorous notes through every part of Divine revelation. Amongst the many figures which inspired pen-men have selected to express the idea of life's fleetness, there are few more significant and telling than those here used by the Patriarch of Uz. A "post"—not a caravan on the road, travelling two miles an hour—but a dromedary on the gallop, or the fleet-footed Arab on a breathless stretch. "Swift ships,"—light vessels, well canvassed, running down the stream before the strong gale. "The eagle,"—not merely sailing through the air with its usual velocity, but with quickened speed swooping down upon its victim. But these figures, strong as they are, fail fully to express the fact. The courier might pause on the road, the swift ship might drop anchor on the way, the rapid eagle in his voracious speed might be turned aside, and hover over its prey, but there is no pause in our mortal life ; the progress to the grave is unbroken as well as swift. At home, abroad ; asleep, awake ; in scenes of business and of pleasure, life pursues its course, sails down the stream, and never anchors till it strikes the deep, dark, desolate, silent shore. Somewhere I have read of an engine of torture which a heartless

despotism, in a certain age and land, invented and employed. It was of the following description :—It was a cell which, at the prisoner's first entrance, presented an air of comfort and ease, but which was so formed that it gradually and slowly contracted its dimensions ; it grew smaller and darker every day. When the prisoner first observed it he grew alarmed, and his alarm was intensified as he observed the sides getting closer and closer together. At length it touched him on all hands, proceeded on until it crushed him to death. Not an unsuitable emblem of human life is this. At the outset our sphere spreads out, and presents many charms ; light streams upon us from all quarters, and many beauties fascinate and thrill ; but gradually the sphere darkens and contracts, narrower and more shadowy it becomes, until we feel pressed down into the deep, dark grave.

Let us look for a moment at the fleetness of life.

I. As a PROPHETIC fact. Can it be that this short life is the end of our existence ? that there is nothing for us beyond ? The goodness of God, the analogy of nature, the indestructible cravings of the soul for a hereafter, assure us that this life is a mere stage in the career of our being.

First :—We quit this life with *unwrought powers*. The tree grows on until it exhausts its latent powers, and animals die not (unless they are destroyed) until they are worn out. But man has to quit this life just as some of his powers are beginning to bud, and others without measure undeveloped and unquickened. Wherefore were these powers given ? Did He intend the tree to be crushed in the germ ? His mental cedars to be cut down and destroyed, while as yet they were mere saplings ?

Secondly :—We quit this life with *unfulfilled plans*. We form plans, all of us ; some larger than others : still, in them we live. The real life of the man is in his grand purpose ; but who fulfils his purposes in this life ? None. Every man leaves his work unfinished. Truly, the fleetness of life is a prophecy of a hereafter. Let us look for a moment at the fleetness of life.

II. As a **TERRIFIC** fact. To whom is it terrible? To all whose hearts are centred in this world. Men who live *in* this world and *for* it may well stand aghast as they think of the speed with which they are being borne away into the vast and boundless. All they hold most precious and love most ardently they are going from every moment. They cannot continue in their mansions, they cannot stay in their divans of pleasure, they cannot maintain their grasp on their wealth, from it they are going more swiftly than courier, "ship," or "eagle."

They should remember two things :

First :—That their *wealth* relatively becomes *less valuable* to them every day. What if a man could say at the end of this year, I have £10,000 more than I had last year, he would still be, even in a worldly sense, a poorer man. His interest in it is considerably diminished, and his time for enjoying it is shorter; he is leaving it every hour, and as he leaves it the sovereigns become shillings, the shillings pence, and the pence in the last stage become worthless mites.

Secondly :—That *eternity* becomes relatively *more awful* to them every day. The longer they live in the world a life of worldliness and sin, the more guilt they contract; and the greater their guilt, the more tumultuous and torturing their eternity. Oh, ye worldlings, bethink yourselves! Let the speed with which you are hurrying down to the sunless, shoreless gulf startle you into spiritual thoughtfulness. Let us look for a moment at the fleetness of life :—

III. As a **CHEERING** fact. To whom is it cheering? To those who, though they are *in* the world are not *of* the world, those who are born into the Divine Kingdom of Christly virtues and imperishable hopes. Such, as they move on, leave the cloudy for the sunny, the stormy for the calm, the discordant for the harmonious, the hideous for the beautiful, the revolting for the lovely and attractive.

CONCLUSION. Whither are we hastening? All, we know, to the grave,—to the "house appointed for all living,"—but whither as to the soul? Fifty winters hence, and where shall

we be? We shall be somewhere, consciously and actively, but where?

“Eternity’s vast ocean lies before thee
Give thy mind sea-room ; keep it wide of earth,
That rock of souls immortal ; cut thy cord ;
Weigh anchor ; spread thy sails ; call every wind ;
Eye the great Pole-star ; make the land of life.”—*Young.*

Sermonic Glances at the Gospel of St. John.

As our purpose in the treatment of this Gospel is purely the development, in the briefest and most suggestive form, of Sermonic outlines, we must refer our readers to the following works for all critical inquiries into the author and authorship of the book, and also for any minute criticisms on difficult clauses. The works we shall especially consult are :—“Introduction to New Testament,” by Bleek ; “Commentary on John,” by Tholuck ; “Commentary on John,” by Hengstenberg ; “Introduction to the Study of the Gospels,” by Westcott ; “The Gospel History,” by Ebrard ; “Our Lord’s Divinity,” by Liddon ; “St. John’s Gospel,” by Oosterzee ; “Doctrine of the Person of Christ,” by Dornor ; Lange ; &c., &c.

Subject.—A Four-fold Theme.

“And upon this came his disciples, and marvelled that he talked with the woman : yet no man said, What seekest thou ? or, Why talkest thou with her ? The woman then left her water-pot, and went her way into the city, and saith to the men, Come, see a man which told me all things that ever I did : is not this the Christ ? Then they went out of the city, and came unto him. In the meanwhile his disciples prayed him, saying, Master, eat. But he said unto them, I have meat to eat that ye know not of. Therefore said the disciples one to another, Hath any man brought him ought to eat ? Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work.”—John iv. 27—34.

EXPOSITION.—*Vcr. 27.*—“*And upon this came his disciples, and marvelled that he talked with the woman.*” The eighth verse informed us that they had been away to the city to buy meat, that is the city of Sychar, about half an hour’s distance from the well. The conversation with the woman had perhaps continued during the whole of their absence. We

have only the record of a fragment of the conversation. Let us be thankful for what we have. The disciples, it would seem, found Him in conversation on their return, and they wondered. Why? Because it was not only contrary to the custom of the Orientals for men to talk to women in the street, but the Jews abstained from all intercourse with the Samaritans. The Rabbis despised the female sex, as utterly without knowledge. In the Talmud it is said "no one salutes a woman," and again, "he who instructs his daughter in the law is like one who acts the fool." No wonder, then, the disciples marvelled when they saw Christ talking with the woman, or rather with a woman, for such is in the original. "*Yet no man said, What seekest thou? or, Why talkest thou with her?*" No one dared to put a question to Him on the subject; they were too reverential to pry into His procedure or plans.

Vcr. 28.—"*The woman then left her water-pot, and went her way into the city.*" The thoughts Christ had breathed into her soon created a tide of emotions that buried for a time all thoughts of worldly things. She forgot her work, left her vessel at the fountain, and ran forth on a new mission.

Vcr. 29.—"*Come, see a man which told me all things that ever I did.*" She does not mean, of course, that He narrated to her every act of her life. No; strong emotions run into poetry. Christ had touched those central points in her history that brought up before her memory the leading chapters of her past life. "*Is not this the Christ?*" μήτι οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ Χριστός. "The grammatical form of this expression, which expects a negative answer, requires that it should be rendered: Is this—or rather—can this be the Christ? The woman put it thus, as if they would naturally reply, Impossible! But beneath that modest way of putting it was the conviction, that if they would but come and judge for themselves, she would have no need to obtrude upon them any opinion of hers, which she well knew would be unworthy of attention. Thus by asking if this could possibly be the Christ, and so rather asking to be helped by them than pretending to be their teacher, she in reality drew their attention to the point in the least offensive and yet most effectual way."—*Brown*.

Vcr. 30.—"*Then they went out of the city, and came unto him.*" The conduct of the Jews had caused Christ to withdraw from Judea, but here the Samaritans stream out from their city to meet Him.

Vcr. 31.—"*In the meanwhile his disciples prayed him, saying, Master, eat.*" Meanwhile, that is during her absence, while she was away in the city telling out her new experience, the disciples urged Him to eat the food they had just brought with them from the city.

Vcr. 32.—"*But he said unto them, I have meat to eat that ye know not of.*" The pronouns "*I*" and "*Ye*" are emphatically expressed to

mark the contrast between His thoughts and theirs. They thought of the material bread, He of the spiritual.

Ver. 33.—"Therefore said the disciples one to another, *Hath any man brought him ought to eat?*" They had not yet reached His meaning, they were thinking of the material food which they considered His exhausted physical nature required.

Ver. 34.—"Jesus saith unto them, *My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work.*" "Here He explains. His whole living, His proper food and sustenance, His whole life and relish,—was to do His Father's will, as He had intimated, already when a boy in the temple. It was there already more to Him than earthly parents or home."—Luke ii. 49.

HOMILETICS: In these verses there are four subjects worthy of note.

I. PREJUDICE CREATING WONDER. "And upon this came his disciples, and marvelled that he talked with the woman." What was the cause of their marvelment? An old, foolish prejudice. The tradition that it was improper for a man to talk to a woman out of doors, and especially for a Jew to hold intercourse with a Samaritan, had been accepted by them without any inquiry. They had never examined the questions for themselves, they had never reached the dogma as an intelligent conclusion. Hence the high and holy converse which their Divine Master held with this woman struck them with surprise, if not with confusion. They marvelled at Him, considered it perhaps beneath His dignity and inconsistent with His high pretensions. How often prejudice acts thus; how often it causes God's declarations and deeds to puzzle and astound! When we set up our own traditional notions as a standard by which to try the Eternal, His procedure will be always filling us with confusion.

"Prejudice is a great obstruction to spiritual progress; it is like an under-current at sea, which, being stronger than the wind, resistlessly carries the vessel back; so that, instead of the mariner finding himself so many miles nearer home, he has really lost ground." So deep and strong is the under-current of prejudice in some natures that the soul, in all her endeavours to advance, is baffled and confounded.

Another thing worthy of note here is

II. REVERENCE LIMITING INQUIRY. "Yet no man said, What seekest thou? or, Why talkest thou with her?" Though they did not understand His conduct, they did not dare to question it. Though to them it seemed improper, they were so impressed with His superior character and judgment, that they refrained from inquiry. Genuine reverence will always limit inquiry; it will not allow the intellect to interrogate the Almighty, and to pry into the decrees of heaven. The intellect reposes on a well-grounded assurance of His unerring wisdom, inviolable rectitude, and unbounded love. Reverence implies some appreciation of the infinite disparity between the thoughts and ways of God and those of man, and therefore it becomes rather a humble listener than a busy critic.

Another thing worthy of note here is

III. CHRISTIANITY WORKING IN LIFE. This is seen in the conduct of the woman. The conversation which Christ had with her broke the cerements of her soul, touched her into new life, set her on new trains of thought, and unsealed within her new fountains of emotion.

Mark how the new faith worked within her. (1.) *Emotionally*. "The woman then left her water-pot, and went her way into the city." All worldly concerns, for a time, seemed buried under the rising waves of newly-evoked sentiments and thoughts. The more divine feeling we have within us, the less we care for worldly things. (2.) *Proselytingly*. "Went her way into the city, and saith to the men, Come, see a man," &c. A strong desire to bring others under the new influences which she now experienced grew up within her, and urged her forth as a messenger of mercy—a blessed missionary. (3.) *Religiously*. She felt that He who spoke to her was divine. "Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ?" She does not ask the question because she has any doubts, she knows that He is, for He has sounded the depths of her history. He had told her all things that ever she did. (4.) *Influentially*. "Then they went out of the city, and came unto him." As she spoke to her townsmen and townswomen her words and looks

were electric. Real earnestness wields a magic wand. A poor woman moving a city is indeed a grand sight.

Another thing worthy of note here is

IV. MAN FEASTING ON THE INVISIBLE. "I have meat to eat that ye know not of," &c. There are two facts which arrest our attention in reading this passage: one is an ordinary *physical* fact in human nature, and the other is a rare *moral* fact in human nature. The *common natural* fact is the influence of emotions on the physical appetite. It would seem that Christ had been for some time without food; His disciples were anxious on this account, and "prayed Him, saying, Master, eat." His reply was, "I have meat to eat that ye know not of." And afterwards He explains Himself and says, "My meat is to do the will of Him that sent me." His mind was obviously so thoroughly charged and engrossed with feelings of devout joy in relation to the will of God, and the progress of His truth in the world, that the natural craving for food was for the time not experienced. It is even so. Such is the close connection between soul and body, that strong emotions, either of a painful or pleasurable character, will overcome for a time our animal appetites. I believe that physical disease and death, as well as physical health and life, are often in emotions. In this incident, therefore, our Saviour showed that He was very man, "made in all points like unto us, yet without sin." The other fact which you have here is the *rare moral* fact in human nature. This is found in the cause of these powerful emotions. What fired and filled the heart of the holy Jesus with these all-absorbing affections? The consciousness of acting in harmony with the Divine will, the manifestation of a new life in the Samaritan mind, the indication which He saw in the multitude around Him of a rich and speedy harvest growing out of the principles which He had inculcated. Now this is a rare moral fact in human nature. It is common enough to see men's emotions overcoming for a time their physical appetites; but it is rare to see these emotions rising from such Divine considerations. The fires that kindle strong emotions in the world generally, are not spiritual and benevolent, but gross and selfish.

Germs of Thought.

Subject.—Buried alive.

“I am forgotten as a dead man out of mind.”—Psalm xxxi. 12.

“To be carnally minded is death.”—Romans viii. 6.

“We are buried with him by baptism unto death.”—Romans vi. 4.

THE title of our subject,—Buried Alive,—would perhaps suggest to some of our hearers at once a terrible physical calamity, such as the closing of a coalpit upon scores of toiling miners; or perhaps the unhappy circumstance, which sometimes occurs, of a person shut up in the coffin ere life was extinct, and being buried prematurely. Such an interment is indeed a calamity—a calamity which strikes a wide-spread horror and distress. But there are other senses in which men are buried alive; and these are suggested by the passages I have read. Man may be said to be buried alive in an unfortunate, a criminal, and a virtuous sense.

I. In an UNFORTUNATE sense. First: Men are often buried alive for the want of *opportunities of mental development*. How frequently we hear men say in certain spheres and conditions of life, that they are buried alive! There is an amount of mental life in all men, whatever the colour of their skin, or the physical and social conditions of their existence. But the development of that life requires certain external conditions—certain favourable opportunities. The human mind is something like seed in the vegetable kingdom. The grain contains life and unbounded possibilities of increase, but unless it finds suitable soil, shower, and sunbeam, the vital principle is buried alive, buried in the shell. Amidst the thousands of our miners who are working underground, and half-starved labourers toiling on our farms, there are multitudes possessing brilliant natural capacities: there are mute Miltons and sleeping Shakespeares, but they are buried for the lack of opportunity.

Acorns in a chest have in them the strength and grandeur of forests, the timber for building cities and constructing fleets. Albeit, they will rot unless they are taken from the chest and placed in external circumstances favourable to their germination and growth. It is so with millions of men on the face of the earth. The wonderful powers of mind with which Heaven has endowed them, are buried with the weight of unfavourable circumstances. Sometimes, indeed, but the cases are rare, we find men through the force of native genius breaking into life through the most unfavourable circumstances; and they seem to startle us as if the acorn by its own vitality leaped from the chest into the soil and sunshine. But the millions remain in the mental grave of thoughtlessness and ignorance. They are "forgotten as dead men out of mind." I rejoice that Englishmen at last are beginning to realise the fearful magnitude of this calamity; the loss which it involves to commercial advancement, literary wealth, and moral influence, and that they have determined that every child born in their dominion, however wretched its indigence, shall have the means of stimulating life and growth.

Secondly: Men are often buried alive *through the infirmities of age*. There are thousands of men to-day living, who are nevertheless buried to the world. Some of them thirty and forty years ago played prominent parts in the drama of public life; they spoke in our senate, they wrote in our journals, they fought in our battles, they preached in our pulpits; but where are they to-day? They are still living on the earth. We are constantly reading of the death of an old Waterloo hero, or Trafalgar veteran, or distinguished theatrical, or prominent statesman, or great scholar, who have not been heard of for many, many years. They have been buried by the infirmities of age. Their eyes have refused to give them the light of the world, their ears the voices of living men, and their limbs to bear them from their lonely chambers. They are "forgotten as dead men out of mind." This is a sad entombment; an entombment that awaits us all if we live long enough.

Thirdly: Men are often buried alive through the *envy of*

their contemporaries. This, perhaps, David meant when he uttered the words, "I am forgotten as a dead man out of mind." As a man that is dead is soon forgotten, so am I; the calumny of my enemies keeps me in obscurity, and buries my reputation. Malice has bespread a thick cloud over a name which once shone brightly. Malice always wishes to murder, and to bury. Let a man be hated by his party and his sect, and they will soon bury his reputation by a common though an unconscious consent; they will so ignore his existence, and so avoid the mention of his name as to entomb him from public view. Many a noble man in Church and State, who is too truthful to temporise, too independent to cringe, is kept in the background by envy. No invitation shall be given to him to take a prominent part in the movements of his party, no mention shall be made of his doings in the organs of their clique. They wish him to be forgotten; their great endeavour is to carpenter a coffin, weave a shroud, dig a grave for his reputation, and bury him out of their sight. Thus the greatest men of all ages have been treated by their contemporaries. They are "forgotten as a dead man out of mind."

Men may be said to be buried alive—

II. In a CRIMINAL sense. "To be carnally minded is death." In the case of all unrenewed men, the moral soul, the conscience with all its Divine instincts and sympathies, is buried in the flesh. The Heavenly Teacher said, that which is "born of the flesh *is* flesh," and "that which is born of the spirit *is* spirit," which utterance implies that the man who is not quickened by the Divine Spirit is merely an animal. He lives as an animal, he works as an animal, he is known as an animal. The moral soul is within him, but it is in the grave of gross corporeity; it is not only not on the throne, its legitimate post, swaying every corporeal impulse, but is paralysed and buried. It is buried in the sense in which a slave is buried who has no liberty of action. Hence Paul speaks of it as "carnally sold under sin." He is, in all his experiences, purposes, and pursuits, "flesh." Matter is the centre of his being, the scene of his constant action, the fountain of his pleasures, the sources of his motives. His

impulses to action are "fleshly lusts," his mind is a "fleshly mind," his wisdom is "fleshly wisdom." He may possess mind of a high order, and educational attainments and embellishments of the first class; and still, in the Saviour's sense, be only "flesh." He may be a merchant, artist, author; but the inspiration of his business, the glow of his genius, the tinge and form of his thoughts, will be flesh rather than spirit. Nay, he may be a religionist, and that of the most orthodox stamp: but his creed and devotions will "be after the law of a carnal commandment." More than half the religion of Christendom is the religion of *flesh*. Its inspiration is fleshly feeling, its forms of thought are fleshly, its rules of life are fleshly, its Christ is "known only after the flesh." It judges after the flesh, walks after the flesh, wars after the flesh; it is altogether sensuous and gross. Wherever the body reigns, be it in the halls of science, the councils of cabinets, at the altars of devotion, or in the pulpits of Christianity, the man is "flesh" and not "spirit." He lives in the realm where nothing but forms are valued or seen:--the sensuous realm bounded above, beneath, and around by matter. His atmosphere is animal feeling—an atmosphere too hazy and thick to transmit the effulgent rays of the spiritual universe. HE IS FLESH. His intellect is but animal cunning of a high order, his heart is but the seat of animal passions. Where in all his actions is the moral man radiating with the image of the Divine?

Men may be said to be buried alive—

III. In a VIRTUOUS sense. "We are buried with him by baptism unto death." Not the baptism of water, of course, but the baptism of that holy fire that burns up all corrupt carnalities. What is buried here? Not the mental faculties, for these are quickened into action; not the conscience—no, this is brought out of its grave and put upon the throne. But the old man with its corruptions and lusts. "I am crucified with Christ," says Paul. "I," who or what? Manifestly not the moral "I," but the carnal, depraved nature. Our "old man" is crucified with him; *i.e.*, our first character with its unholy lusts, wrong purposes, and evil habits. This is

destroyed and buried, buried as Christ's body was buried. Whilst this carnal "I" is buried, the moral "I" is quickened and raised. "Nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me."

Now, this is a virtuous burying alive. It means being dead indeed unto sin, and alive unto righteousness. The death and burial of the carnal self are essential to the life and resurrection of the spiritual. As you must bury the seed in the earth before you can have the living plant, so you must bury the carnal nature before you have spiritual life. When this burial takes place the moral soul breaks through the cerements of death, comes out as a student of the universe, as the monarch of the body, and as a worshipper of the Infinite. Would to God there were more men buried alive in this sense! Buried with Christ, self-oblivious, lost in the great cause of universal benevolence.

CONCLUSION.—In which of these senses are you buried alive? Is it in the *unfortunate* sense? Some of you, perhaps, feel that your faculties are buried for the want of opportunities for their development; that could you come out from the prison of the clerk's desk, or from the low drudgery of manual labour, you could do something better with your powers than you can possibly do in your present position. I respect this feeling, it is the feeling of true manhood; cherish it, and invoke Providence to aid you to bound into another orbit. Some of you, perhaps, feel that you are being buried with the infirmities of age; you cannot do what you once did and what you devoutly wish to do. Well, the Great Master accepts the will for the deed. He estimates the value of the service by the motive, not the effort. Those infirmities, will soon be over. "This mortal must put on immortality." Some, perhaps, feel they are buried by the envy of their circle. They are kept in the background and shadowed in obscurity when they would be out in labour. This is the fate of greater men than you. David, by this malignant feeling, was once "forgotten as a dead man out mind;" Christ "trod the wine-press alone."

Some of you, perhaps, are buried in the *criminal* sense.

Germes of Thought.

You are dead in the grave of depravity—a terrible condition this! The thunders of the law are rolling over you, and you hear them not; the voices of mercy in every variety of note load the air, but you are deaf to all. Would that some sound from the heavens above, or from the earth beneath, would startle you into action! All I can say is, Arise from the dead, and Christ shall give you life.

Some of you, I believe, are dead in the *virtuous* sense—dead to sin. You can enter in some degree into the words of Paul when he said, “God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me and I unto the world.” “I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live: yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God.”

SERMONIC NOTES ON THE VISIONS OF EZEKIEL. No. VIII.

Subject.—A Drama of Exile.

“Do thou, son of man, prepare thee stuff for removing (make thee an exile’s implement) &c. &c.”—Ezekiel xii. 3—7.

BECAUSE of the unbelief of the people in the prophet’s warning, he has once more, not only to utter words vigorously descriptive of the impending doom, but by symbolic action to illustrate that doom. He not only composes the tragedy, but is the actor in the strangely dramatic prophecy. For he not merely predicts, in so many sentences, that one form of the approaching retribution will be exile of the prince and the people from the sacred city, but by getting together his scrip, coat, shoes, staff, girdle, and necessary food, and digging a hole through the wall, and stealing himself away at night, he has to personify an exile, and so show to the eye, as well as the ear of the people, what exileship means. He has to act what passes before him as a vision, that the enacted vision may impress Israel. Notice—

I. THE VISION IN ITS HISTORICAL FULFILMENT. All that Ezekiel himself, already an exile by Chebar, tells his fellow-exiles there, and probably lets the population in distant Jerusalem also know, about the Chaldean captivity of those who were still remaining in the Holy City, was literally fulfilled, when, as Dean Stanley strikingly writes, "After a midnight in July, still kept as a fast by the Jews, before the sun had risen, the king Zedekiah, with his wives and children and the royal guard, escaped, not by any of the regular gates, but by a passage broken through a narrow alley confined between two walls, at the south-eastern corner of the city, which the Chaldean army had not been completely able to invest. They passed out with their heads muffled, either for disguise or to express their sense of the greatness of the calamity, and bearing on their shoulders such articles of value as they hoped to save. The king was captured, and according to the barbarous usage of the East, his eyes were put out and he consigned to penal labour as a slave in a mill."

II. THE VISION IN ITS PRACTICAL LESSONS FOR THE PRESENT. This calamity of exile was a penalty for Israel's sin. And herein we are at once reminded—

1. *The consequence of sin is moral exile.* All evil, not only in act, but in thought and in wish, involves in greater or less degree a going away from the Holy—is a self-exileship, not perhaps, as in the vision, from a holy place, but from the Holy God. The angels by sin became exiles from heaven; Adam and Eve by sin became exiles from Eden, for as they shrink away from the flaming sword that guards the garden, while nature wails and man weeps, it seemed as though—

"Earth had exiles as hopeless as when
A Heaven's empire was lost."

Demas became an exile from the church, for with a pathos that tells of tears the apostle writes, "Demas hath forsaken us, having loved the present world." Thus was he like the very rich young man, who went away from the Christ who claimed sacrifice—exiled himself very sorrowfully but very

surely—"him who made the great refusal," Dante calls him as he saw him in the penal world of shadows. And in the great crisis of all, the last day, it is predicted there will be exiles still—"these shall go away into everlasting punishment." The Saviour indicates, in the experience of the prodigal son, that exile is the essence of sin; it leads man from the Father God "into a far country."

2. *This moral exile is awfully sad.* (α) This exile is *burdensome*. The man goes with the baggage of an emigrant. He carries as much as he can. And he who goes away from God into any sin goes burdened. Responsibility, an accusing conscience, a growing fear; these, as with Cain, load guilty souls. (β) The exile was *severed from social ties*. With what solitariness of soul, as though he were utterly alone and in the dark, does each man have to say, "*I have sinned*"? (γ) The exile went out into wild *uncertainties*. Whither he should hurry when once beyond the city walls he could not tell. And into what unexplored regions of wrong-doing, or what abysses of consequent remorse a sinner may wander, who can tell? The only infallible revelation warns such a man of a "bottomless pit." Beyond fathoming are the deeps of hell.

3. *This moral exile is stealthy.* Not through a gate, but by a hole dug through the wall; not at noon, but at night, the exile gets away from the holy city. So with the beginnings of all sin. The excuses, the concealments, the artifices of the selfish, the impure, the mean, breathe the stealthy spirit of the father of lies. Evil chooses the dark first, and then gets blinded.

4. *This moral exile is shameful.* The exile, ashamed to look on the ground, is a true type of those who, first with blush of shame, and whitened lip, and trembling voice, or hand, do wrong; and who at last "will wake to shame and everlasting contempt." Thank God, for such exiles the message is, "The Son of Man is come to seek and to save the lost."

Bristol.

URIJAH R. THOMAS.

WEEK-NIGHT SKETCHES ON THE FIRST BOOK OF
SAMUEL.

No. IX.

Subject.—An Inquisitive Man and how to treat him.

“And Saul’s uncle said unto him and to his servant, Whither went ye ? And he said, To seek the asses : and when we saw that they were nowhere, we came to Samuel. And Saul’s uncle said, Tell me, I pray thee, what Samuel said unto you. And Saul said unto his uncle, He told us plainly that the asses were found. But of the matter of the kingdom whereof Samuel spake, he told him not.”—Chap. x. 14—16.

SAUL has now reached his home, and is determined to conceal the history of the past few days from the knowledge of others. If the Prophet’s communications were to become generally known, they would render Saul’s position most uncomfortable. Many would discredit them ; some would envy his promotion ; while others might devise measures to take his life, or prevent the realisation of his hope. The first man to test the resolution of Saul was his uncle ; he endeavoured to obtain from him a full account of his recent visit to Samuel, but in vain.

I. **THIS MAN’S INQUISITIVENESS.** Human nature is naturally inquisitive ; it tries to open the secrets of the earth ; to unfold the mystery of the heavens ; but especially does its eye delight to rest upon the transactions of personal life. Human biography is so interesting, that, touched by its spell, men instinctively stand to inquire.

1. *The Interrogator.* “Saul’s uncle.” People frequently presume upon their relationship to ask any questions they think proper. They imagine that we have no right to conceal anything from them ; and that if we do, it either betrays a cold retentiveness in us, or a lack of confidence in them. And their kinship is made a plea for unwelcome intrusions, or impudent interferences, totally incompatible with manly etiquette. Does it not appear strange that we should be more uncourteous to our relations than to those by whom we are casually surrounded ? Ought not the sanctity of friendship to inspire a respect which even acquaintance cannot command ?

2. *The inquiries made.* "And Saul's uncle said unto him and to his servant, Whither went ye?" (ver. 14). Had not Saul's father commissioned him to seek the asses, therefore what right had this uncle to interfere in the matter, especially as the journey had terminated successfully? Some relatives are always inquiring into the arrangements of other families. We can hardly move out of our doors but some one must ask, either us or our neighbours, whither we went. Then, when Saul had told his uncle the object of the journey, and of his casual meeting with Samuel, the uncle, no doubt thinking that something more had occurred than was narrated, still continues his questions. "Tell me, I pray thee, what Samuel said unto you." Saul's uncle remembered the critical state of the nation; how that its king was about to be chosen, and thinking that Samuel had communicated some information respecting the new selection, secretly hoping that he himself was the destined monarch, he persisted in his inquiries.

3. *The sources of his expected information.* "And Saul's uncle said unto him and to his servant" (ver. 14). The uncle no doubt thought that if he could not obtain the required information from Saul, that he would have little difficulty in getting it from the servant. Servants are not always the most trustworthy persons, and especially with news at all exciting, or of family interest. They are generally the first to run with the story to some neighbouring servant, and then concealment is at an end. But Saul's servant appears to have been an exception to this rule: either he did not know the nature of Samuel's communications, or else he had the discretion to keep them to himself. How valuable would such a servant be in these days!

II. THE MANNER IN WHICH IT WAS TREATED. Some men have not sufficient power of character to contend with inquisitive people; and the artful inquirer, without raising the slightest suspicion, gains all the information required. It requires some little art to deal successfully with such folk; and of this Saul was happily possessed.

1. *Saul's reply was truthful.* "He told us plainly that the asses were found" (ver. 16). We can never be justified

in telling lies, not even to silence inquisitive men. Saul recognised this fact; and while speaking the truth, withheld part of the tidings.

2. *Saul's reply was discreet.* "But of the matter of the kingdom whereof Samuel spake, he told him not." Had Saul told his uncle the whole facts of the case, his uncle might have taken steps to have thwarted the anticipation of Saul, and to have ingratiated himself into public favour, that he might be chosen king. Saul's reply prevented this.

3. *Saul's reply was modest.* If such promotion had come to most young men, they would have hurried to their friends, and in a fit of excitement have communicated the whole story. But not so with Saul, he kept it in his own heart until God should read it to an assembled nation.

4. *Saul's reply was short.* He did not betray himself by a multitude of words; he did not by some unthinking sentence excite the suspicion of his uncle; but briefly told him about the asses. Here Saul displayed his common sense.

Lessons:—

(1.) *Never tell people all they wish to know.*

(2.) *Do not abuse the sanctity of family relationships by petty intrusions.*

(3.) *That discretion is the only safety of a promoted life.*

JOSEPH S. EXELL.

Peterborough.

DEPREDACTIONS OF TIME.—"Time is the most subtle, yet the most insatiable of depredators, and by appearing to take nothing is permitted to take all, nor can it be satisfied until it has stolen the world from us and us from the world. It constantly flies, yet overcomes all things by flight: and although it is the present ally, it will be the future conqueror of death. Time, the cradle of hope but the grave of ambition, is the stern conjector of fools, but the salutary counsellor of the wise, bringing all they dread to the one, and all they desire to the other; but, like Cassandra, it warns us with a voice that even the sagest discredit too long, and the silliest believe too late. Wisdom walks before it, opportunity with it, and repentance behind it: he that has made it his 'friend will have little to fear from his enemies, will have little to hope from his friends.'"
—*Cotton.*

The Preacher's Dissecting Room;

CONTAINING

PEN PORTRAITS OF REPRESENTATIVE PREACHERS.

"WITHOUT A PARABLE SPAKE HE NOT UNTO THEM."

Complaints against the modern pulpits are rife alike in social circles and literary productions. Whilst many of them are characterised by flippant ignorance and sceptical rancour, others are marked both by good judgment and holy feeling. The purpose of these Sketches is the improvement of the pulpit. Nothing would the writer deprecate more than to wound the heart or get the finger of ridicule pointed at any honest-hearted preacher of Christ; hence he has clad his characters and circumstances with a fictitious vesture—like the Great Teacher, he has spoken in parables. We shall examine representative preachers of the four great prevailing schools—the SENSATIONAL, including (1) the tragic; (2) the comic; (3) the rhapsodic. The INTELLECTUAL, including (1) the technical; (2) the grand; (3) the philosophic. The SPIRITUAL, including (1) the mystical; (2) the intuitional; and the MISCELLANEOUS, including a great variety.

XVII.

REV. W. RUNABOUT, M.A.

(Continued from vol. vi., page 292.)

IT is some years since we heard the Rev. Mr. Runabout in a country town about 200 miles from London. He was accustomed (and still is) frequently to leave his London charge and visit the provinces to preach anniversary and other sermons. Indeed he was never at rest: he was one of those thin, tall, small-headed men that have no repose in their nature, and who have generally a marvellous itching for speech. He would hail every opportunity that would afford him scope for the rattle of his lingual organ. It was on a beautiful autumnal Sunday morning, and we had to walk a mile or two through shady lanes and waving cornfields. Our companion was a remarkable young man, a man of high genius, extensive culture, and rare moral worth. As we shall have to give his criticism upon the sermon, a brief sketch of him may not be unacceptable. He was the son of wealthy parents: his father, a man of enormous brain, and his mother a woman of affluent sympathies. He combined in fine proportions the robust intellect of his father, and the rich emotionality of his mother. His body was a fit resident for such a soul. His highly-symmetric frame had stretched beyond the ordinary mould; his expansive brow and his large

blue eyes, which shot out the blended rays of a high intellect and noble heart, indicated that no common man could be his teacher. He had studied at Oxford, travelled much on the Continent, and read most of our best authors, both ancient and modern. With remarkable facility he could dive into the depths of abstract speculation, and anon tower into the bright glowing firmament of poetry. His sympathies were broad and genial; he looked out upon nature with admiration, on man with love, and up to the Great Father with profound reverence and devotion. Although he loathed the nomenclature of theology, the polemics of ecclesiastics, and the exclusiveness of the sects, he received the Bible as the Word of God, revered and appropriated its universal truths, and bowed in earnest docility to the divine teachings of the Great Son of Man. Yet his father, who was stiffly Calvinian, and his father's minister and friends, because he could not adopt the technical tenets of their creed, mourned over him as a grievous heretic. Because there were only a few pulpits in which he felt any interest, and they at a great distance from his home, he often spent his Sundays either in his own library or out in the great temple of nature. Indeed, as we walked on through the fields to the church, he often expressed a wish to tarry out rather than enter the sanctuary. Once on our way he broke out in the language of Festus:—

“Come, let us to the hills! where none but God
Can overlook us; for I hate to breathe
The breath, and think the thoughts of other men,
In close and crowded cities, where the sky
Looks like an angry father frowningly.
I love the hills, and I love loneliness;
And oh! I love the woods, those natural fanes
Whose very air is holy; and we breathe
Of God: for He doth come in special place,
And while we worship He is there for us.”

Still, on we went and entered the church, which was very crowded. Mr. Runabout took for his text part of the fourteenth verse of the fifth chapter of Joshua, “As captain of the Lord's host am I now come.” His introduction consisted in a florid description of the scenery and circumstances of the children of Israel. They had traversed the labyrinthian wilderness, and forded the rolling Jordan; and now before them towered majestic palm groves, waving their branches in the winds of heaven. Before their vision rose the city of Jericho with its massive and impenetrable fortresses. What did Joshua see? Ah! what? “He lifted up his eyes and looked and behold,” &c., &c.

His divisions were—

I. *The Church is the Lord's host.* It is a host because of its teeming numbers, and grand unity. Here he entered into a minute description of an army marching to battle. He extolled the soldiers and pronounced Wellington one of the greatest men that England ever produced. II. *Christ is the captain of the host.* A captain which they themselves had chosen, a captain they were bound to follow, a captain that furnished them with all the necessary ammunition, a captain that leads them on to glory.

This was the substance of his discourse. All the thoughts were common, but they were highly decorated, they spangled with gilt, and they glared with gaudy colours. His voice was clear as the clarion, and his elocution good. But there was no genuine feeling, no grasp of any great truth, no close grappling with any conscience. All was a picture drawn to the eye of the congregation, and as a picture very showy, but inartistic and dauby withal. On our way home I asked my companion to tell me what he thought of the discourse, and thus he spoke: "The man is no thinker, otherwise he would not have spoken of Wellington as a great man. A person may be a great artist, tactician, orator, butcher, and yet a small man. Wellington, I think, was a great warrior, but a little man. A great man, I take it, is a man so inspired and permeated with the ideas of God and the Christly spirit as to be too magnanimous for vengeance and too unselfish to seek his own ends. He is the greatest man who cherishes in his heart and embodies in his life most of the spirit of Him 'who conquered when He fell.' How sad it is when those who make the attempt to teach men do not know what a real man is! Nor is he morally earnest: otherwise he would not spend such time upon the decorations of his thoughts. The idea of a man standing up in the presence of God and before a whole congregation and talking of the 'sun fringing the clouds with golden tassels,' the 'trees bowing reverentially before the breath of Æolus,' and the 'moon stooping down and softly kissing the troubled waters into rest.' What man of any moral earnestness could talk such stuff? Indeed, the preacher reminded me of a piece of forensic eloquence which I read the other day in one of the American papers. Before a court of justice in Pennsylvania the counsel is reported to have said, 'Your honour sits high up on the adorable seat of justice, like the Asiatic rock of Gibraltar, while the majestic streams of immutable rectitude, like the cadaverous clouds of the deep and wide-spread valley, flow meandering at your lordship's feet.'"

EPISCOPUS.

Biblical Criticism.

"Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not high-minded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; that they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate; laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life. O Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust, avoiding profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of science falsely so called."—1 Timothy vi. 17—20.

VERSE 17. *Them that are rich.* There were many rich men at Ephesus. This appendix of the epistle is of great importance. *Trust.* This evil trust, strengthening their grasp upon wealth, checks the enjoyment which St. Paul presently mentions. *Uncertain riches*, lit., the *uncertainty of riches*. *Uncertainty.* We ought not to rely on riches, because they are most uncertain for the time to come. *In God*, Greek ἐν τῷ Θεῷ. Thus the antithesis to the words, "in uncertain riches," is more strongly marked. *Trust.* Leaning upon God is strong. Omit τῷ ζῶντι, the living, read ἐν τῷ Θεῷ, in God, Tisch., Alf. *Richly.* For else no man would be rich. *To enjoy.* Enjoyment is in giving, not in hoarding. Idleness ought neither to pertain to a man, nor to his resources (James v. 2, 3).

Verse 18. *Do good.* To be rich in good works follows this diligence: ἀγαθόν, good, and καλόν, good or honourable, are not the same in meaning: ἀγαθός implies blessedness (comp. Mark x. 18): καλός implies beauty. *Ready to distribute.* In imparting individually. *Willing to communicate.* By lending and contributing to the common lot with many. The rich are generally best pleased with a division of proceedings, plans and property, and are haughty and insolent.

Verse 19. *Laying up in store for themselves.* The best investment for the future. The antithesis is, willing to communicate. So Job iv. 10, "Be not afraid to perform

works of charity, for thou wilt lay up for thyself a good deposit for the day of necessity." Otherwise the rich gather riches not for themselves but for others. To collect by giving is a pleasing oxymoron (union of contradictories). The preposition ἀπὸ in ἀποθησαυρίζοντας, laying up in store, possesses great force, apart from a distant time. *A good foundation.* An elliptical apposition, laying up a treasure that is a good foundation. The metaphor is cumulative, as in Ps. xxxvii. 6, and is explained by Gezer. He calls works of beneficence a good foundation, and to this is opposed the uncertainty of riches. θεμέλιος, foundation on which we depend, as on a security. *Against the time to come.* The antithesis is, *in this world*, ver. 17: comp. chap. iv. 8. *May lay hold*, as if escaping from shipwreck. A merchant, having been saved from shipwreck, finds his property sent home before him. A contest is mentioned in verse 12: the expression is the same but the figure different. (For αἰώνιον, eternal, read ὄντως, really, Tisch., Alf. Render *that which is really life*. So Bengel. *Really*: comp. ὄντως, indeed, ch. v. 3, 5, 16. *True life* from the living God.)

Verse 20. *O Timothy.* He addresses him familiarly as his son (ch. i. 18), with gravity and love. The conclusion, (verses 20, 21) answers to the beginning of the epistle, and must be explained from it. *That which is committed* (i. 18). So the commandment, verse 14: 2 Tim. i. 14. The antithesis is, *vain babblings*. *Profane and vain babblings.* Sept., τοὺς κενολογούντας, those that mutter (Is. viii. 19). Barbarous words were in former times used by the magi: they were said to be possessed of a magical power, though in reality they had none; indeed they were utterly worthless. Paul seems to have had this circumstance in view, as he has substituted a word of greater significance; φωνή, a voice, indicates vehemence: comp. 2 Tit. ii. 15, 16. Moreover, γνῶσις, science, suits (Hebrew word for) a wizard, which the Greeks have certainly translated γνώστην, a wizard, in the books of Samuel and Kings. Thus Paul calls false teachers by terms which signify magi and magic, to show how he loathes them: comp. γόητες, seducers (2 Tim. iii. 15). Clement

of Alexandria adds to these words of Paul; the heretics being reproved by this word *φωρις*, "reject the epistles to Timothy." *And oppositions.* A false knowledge eagerly embraced various oppositions taken from philosophy, maintaining that there are two rival gods, one good, the other bad, and in both wonderful oppositions. Paul notices these *oppositions*, and at the same time ridicules them sharply by a play on their words, because their teachers oppose themselves to the truth and their *φύσεις*, positions (*ἀντιθέσεις*, oppositions). Are opposed to the foundations already laid. See the kindred words, *ἀντιδιатиθεμένους*, oppose themselves, and *θεμέλιος*, foundation (2 Tim. ii. 25, 19). On the other hand, Paul himself employs the wisest oppositions in his epistles, particularly in those to Timothy (1 Tim. i. 7, 8; iii. 16; iv. 1, 6, 7; vi. 2, 3, 5, 6, 10, 11), where we meet with, *but thou*. Besides 2 Tim. ii. 15—23, the phrase *but thou* is frequent (ch. x. 14, ix. 5). *Of science falsely so called.* Which (ver. 21) refers to science without any epithet. The *Gnostics*, who are denoted by a change of the abstract for the concrete, used to boast of their doctrine, and called it science; but Paul says it was falsely so called: they are without understanding (ch. i. 7).

C. E. T.

The Preacher's Finger-Post.

SKETCHES FROM GENESIS (27). JOSEPH'S FIRST EXPERIENCE OF LIFE.

These are the generations of Jacob. Joseph, being seventeen years old, was feeding the flock with his brethren; and the lad was with the sons of Bilhah, and with the sons of Zilpah, his father's wives: and Joseph brought unto his father their evil report."—Chap. xxxvii. 2.

In this verse the following things are worthy of notice:

I. This young man was taught to work.

Though Joseph was the pet child of his father, he was not kept at home to spend his time in idleness, but was sent, at the age of seventeen, to feed the flock with his brethren. Jacob had right views of work; felt it to be no degradation for his son to take to the occupation of a shepherd. Unfortunately for society in the present day, not

a few parents, as well as others, attach a certain stigma upon manual labour, and those who are compelled to work for their daily food are frequently despised and treated with contempt. Heaven's law is that all should work in some department of life or other, and he who transgresses this law sins against himself, and injures society at large. Jacob not only had right views of labour when sending Joseph to feed the flock, but had the welfare of his son at heart as well. True he could have willed his son a large number of cattle and servants, but their value would be greatly decreased did not Joseph know how to look after the flock himself, and thus be able to give his orders to the servants. A man must look after his own business *himself* if he wants to succeed in life. Parents may leave large fortunes to their children; these can easily be disposed of; but if the father teaches the son to *work*, he will have something to fall back upon. Besides, the real happiness of man is greatly dependent upon the amount of work he is able to accomplish. An idle life is most miserable to the individual himself, as well as a heavy drag on the wheels of progress.

II. He was placed in favourable circumstances.

He was not sent to a neighbouring farm as a hireling,

but to look after his father's property; this would naturally cause him to enter more thoroughly into the work, and take a deeper interest in the events of the day. Certain inducements held forth to young persons have a great stimulating effect; and it is a great blessing that bright and pleasant dreams float on the air before us when we start in life; what would become of the world were it not so? It is here said that "the lad was with the sons of Bilhah, and with the sons of Zilpah, his father's wives." These were nearer his own age than the other sons of Jacob, consequently more congenial companionship could be expected for him there. Some have to battle with the difficulties of life almost from the cradle; the first sounds that reached their ears were those of the fierce winds and the roaring waves of adversity and distress, whilst others have but little experience of the storms of life; their path has been made smooth, "their lines have fallen to them in pleasant places." It is a matter of great importance to a young man to have a fair start in life, and his heart ought to be filled with thankfulness to God if the wind was fair, the sea calm, and the sky clear when he left the port to sail on life's ocean.

III. He saw the iniquity

of society. "And Joseph brought unto his father their evil report."

Joseph saw the evil which his brothers did, and reported the same to his father. Though placed in very favourable circumstances he came in contact with evil, and that among his own family. Hitherto, perhaps, he had been more in the company of his father than that of any one else, and thus was likely to form wrong ideas of society: whatever his previous notions were, he now faces the stern reality, and perceives the wickedness of man coming to sight in mean and contemptible acts. Society has not altered for the better in that respect; let the young man enter life under the most favourable circumstances, he will not be long before he can return to his father with an evil report concerning the deeds of those around him. In the office he will soon find out the trickery of his fellow-clerks; in the house of business, the dishonesty of the firm will soon come to the surface; in the church, the hypocrisy of many of his fellow-members will not remain long undetected. To whatever society he turns he will meet with much that is wrong; and as long as the present standard of morality will be upheld in the mercantile and political world there is but little hope of matters improving.

IV. He remained uncontaminated in the midst of evil.

We are not to condemn the conduct of Joseph in reporting the wickedness of his brethren; it was not done from any ill-feeling towards them, neither was it for the sake of gratifying a tale-bearing propensity; he had a nobler object in view than that. The fact of his having reported it shows that he stood aloof from the evil, and his future history confirms this view of the case. It was no small temptation for him when he found himself removed from his father's sight to join his brethren to do evil. But the principles instilled into his mind at home were stronger than the temptation. It may have been his first trial, and preparatory to a yet fiercer one which was to meet him. It is not an easy matter for a young man to withstand many of the temptations that assail him, especially those coming from companions with whom he is associated at the commencement of his career. How many young persons have succumbed to the enticements of those engaged in the same house of business, and have ended their career in misery and disgrace! The difficulty is to take a bold stand at first; if he once gives way, the probability is that he will never regain a firm footing; the flood is so strong that he

will be irresistibly borne down to destruction. Though the temptations are strong, such instances as that of Joseph proves it to be possible to resist them successfully, and every young man ought to say when tempted to do evil, "If others have mixed in a corrupt community with undefiled garments, why should not I do the same?"

V. He sought to better society.

This was his object in bringing the report to his father. No other course presented itself to his mind; he was but a lad, his remonstrances would be in vain, and his father was ignorant of their doings; Joseph thought if the old man had knowledge of it that it would soon be put a stop to. He was grieved at the proceedings of his brethren, and did all in his power to mend their ways. It is an heroic act in a young man to abstain from the evil practices of those around him, but a greater heroism is manifested when he tries to stem the torrents of sin. It is one of the noblest ambitions that can enter the human mind, to better the society in which one lives. All of us find crooked places here and there, which we can and ought to make straight; it is our bounden duty not to pass them unnoticed; at whatever cost and personal inconvenience, it is our high privilege to leave the world better

than we found it. When reading the history of past generations we find that our forefathers did not act on the principle, "Let well alone," but entered the thick of the engagement, and fought bravely for the principles which were dearer to them than life. We are now reaping the harvest which they sowed with their life's blood. Let us have a higher, a nobler, a diviner object in view than to live to self; let us live to others, and let our lives be the salt of the earth, purifying society of its baseness and defilement.

Falmouth.

CYMRU.

*Subject: BENEFICENCE THE
DIVINE END OF HUMAN IN-
DUSTRY.*

"Let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth."—
Ephesians iv. 28.

At the outset there are three things to be noticed, as implied in the words. First, Every man *should labour*. "Let him labour, working with his hands." Industry is one of the primary laws which Heaven has imposed not on one man, but on the race. To every man the Great Master says, "Do your own business and work with your own hands." The importance of this law is seen in the evils, personal and social, that spring from its neglect. Indolence is injurious to the *individual*. It originates lassi-

tude, disease, weakness, and that *ennui* which often becomes intolerable. It is also injurious to *society*. The man who does not work lives on the productions of other men, and is therefore not a mere pauper, living on the bounty of others, but a pilferer, appropriating to himself that to which he has no right. "If any would not work, neither should he eat." This is the law. The time may come when human governments will punish as thieves those who eat without working. Secondly, Every man should labour *to accumulate*. "That he may have to give." His obligation to labour is not to end when he has realised just sufficient to meet his own exigencies; he has to go on and amass a reserved fund. Property is power, and it is the duty of every man to increase his power for good in the world. Fortune-making is an obligation. Thirdly, Every man should labour to accumulate, *in order to give*. "That he may have to give to him that needeth." This is the point of the text. Benevolence is the Divine end of human industry. Men are to work and accumulate, not in order to gratify their vanity, by making a gorgeous display before their contemporaries, nor to enjoy the *otium cum dignitate*, but in order to help the needy. We offer the following remarks upon the subject.

I. It recognises *the right of man to the product of his own labour*. Hence he is here authorised, nay, commanded, to *give* what he has attained. There is no property on earth so thoroughly a man's own as that which he has produced by his own labour, whether mental or manual. It is his, no other has a right to dispose of it; it is at his absolute disposal. The property that comes to a man as the result of other men's labours, especially of the labours of those who lived ages back, is not his in a sense half so real or righteous as that which he himself has produced. The humble cottage which the poor man has built for himself is his in a truer sense than the old castle which the modern baron calls his own.

II. It recognises *the claims which society has on its members*. Society is an organic whole; we are all members one of another, and each member should contribute his part to the good of the whole. There is everywhere "him that needeth." "The poor shall not cease out of the land." "Let no man seek his own." The "strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak." "As we have opportunity, let us do good unto all men." He, therefore, who works merely for himself, makes himself the end of his activities, is a rebel against the Divine constitution of humanity.

III. It recognises *the obligation of every man to be his own almoner*. The man himself is to "give," and to give while he liveth, "to him that needeth," not to him that will be needing an age or ages on. He is to look after the poor and indigent round him, and with his own hand minister to their necessities. There are men who give away large sums on their dying bed, when they can hold on to their property no longer. Is there a spark of true benevolence in this? The wretched man while living saw living men and women all around him struggling with poverty and dying of starvation, whilst he, with his hundreds of thousands, which he bequeaths in his will, looked heartlessly on and put forth no helping hand. And these men, forsooth, are called benefactors!

IV. It recognises *the duty of every man to continue to labour as long as he is able*. Men in business generally look forward to a period of retirement; their hopes are directed to a mansion in some lovely spot where they shall enjoy repose and indulge in luxuries. That period is fixed at the point when they consider they have realised property sufficient for themselves and families. But no man, according to the text, has a right to do this. If he has got into a prosperous calling, let him carry it on

as long as he is able, and give the results to "him that needeth." Wesley says, "Get all you can, save all you can, and give all you can." Keep on getting as long as you can, in order that you may keep on giving.

V. It recognises *the conditions of human happiness*. It provides for the happiness of the *individual*. There is a kind of pleasure in the pursuit of wealth, and some measure of gratification in its possession, associated, however, with a large amount of harassing cares and anxieties. But this is not human happiness. Human happiness consists in the exercise of social love and benevolent sympathy. "It is more blessed to give than to receive." In truth here alone is the source of true happiness; love communicating love is the happiness of God Himself. Thankful should we be that we are placed in a world where there are cases of distress to afford a mighty stimulus and ample scope for the full play of all the generous sentiments of our nature. It provides also for the happiness of *society*. The happiness of society consists in the mutual good will and sympathy that prevail amongst its members, and how could this be promoted if there was no opportunity for the giving and receiving of favours? The true givers are happy in giving, and the deserving recipients are

happy in their gratitude, and thus social harmony and happiness are promoted by the ministry of benevolence. "Because," said Job, "I delivered the poor that cried, the fatherless, and him that had none to help him, the blessing of him that was ready to perish was upon me, and I caused the widow's heart to sing for joy."

"Is thy cruse of comfort failing !
rise and share it with another,
And through all the years of famine
it shall serve thee and thy brother.
Love Divine will fill the store-
house, or thy handful still renew,
Scanty for one will often make a
royal feast for two.
For the heart grows rich in giving,
all its wealth is living gain ;
Seeds which mildew in the garner,
scattered fill with gold the plain.
Is thy burden hard and heavy ? do
thy steps drag wearily ?
Help to bear thy brother's burden,
God will bear both it and thee.
Numband weary on the mountains,
wouldst thou sleep amid the snow ?
Chafe that frozen form beside thee,
and together both shall glow.
Art thou stricken in life's battle ?
many wounded round thee moan ;
Lavish on their wounds thy balsams,
and that balm shall heal thine own.
Is the heart a well left empty ?
none but God its void can fill ;
Nothing but a ceaseless fountain,
can its ceaseless longings fill :
Is the heart a living power ? self-
entwined, its strength sinks low ;
It can only live in loving, and by
serving love will grow."

MRS. CHARLES.

Subject : SOUL-ELEVATION.

"And the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ"—2 Thessalonians III. 5.

There are many kinds of elevation that man aspires to. There is *mercantile* elevation : men struggle to become the leading merchants of the age. There is *civic* elevation : men strive hard for the posts of magistrate, mayor, statesman, premier. There is *ecclesiastical* elevation, and men labour hard to attain the posts of deans, canons, bishops, and archbishops. But all these elevations involve not the true elevation of man ; in truth, the men who often attain these elevations are amongst the most degraded of mankind. What, then, is true elevation ? The text shall answer the question.

I. It consists in a certain state of HEART IN RELATION TO THE DIVINE. First : "The love of God." What love ? The love of gratitude for the kindest Being, the love of reverence for the greatest Being, and the love of adoration for the holiest and the best Being. And all this *supreme*. Thus centring the soul in God we dwell in love, and therefore dwell in Him. Secondly : "Waiting for Christ." Looking forward and anticipating His advent to release us from all the sorrows and sins of this mortal state. *Patient* waiting. It requires patience : the wheels of His chariot seem to

tarry. "O Lord, how long?" Here is true elevation! High up in sympathy with the Everlasting One and in concert with His blessed Son.

II. It consists in a certain state of heart PRODUCED by the Divine. "The Lord direct your hearts." The hearts of men in their unregenerate state are everywhere but in this direction, they are as sheep that have gone astray, prodigals that have left their father's house, stars that have wandered from their orbits. Who shall bring them back? No one can but THE ALMIGHTY ONE. "The Lord direct your hearts." Ministers may argue, declaim, exhort, entreat, threaten, promise, but unless the Lord will come to the work their labour is all in vain.

CONCLUSION.—Let us strive after this soul-elevation! Let us essay to set our hearts on God and wait for His blessed Son.

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Subject: THE SICKNESS OF LAZARUS.

"Therefore his sisters sent unto him, saying, Lord, behold, he whom thou lovest is sick."—John xi. 3.

The story of the family at Bethany is well known, and though old, it is ever fresh. Elsewhere we have discoursed upon it.* The words before us present—

I. A PRIVILEGE OF INCOMPARABLE VALUE. What is

* See "Resurrections of the Bible."

that? To be loved by Christ. "He whom thou lovest." To be loved by some beings is of no advantage; their love is carnal, selfish, fickle. But what is Christ's love? First: It is *tender*. So tender that in all the afflictions of its objects He is afflicted. They are as dear to Him as Himself. "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto the least of these my brethren ye have done it unto me." "Why persecutest thou me?" Secondly: It is *constant*. His love is not founded upon any mistakes as to our characters: as to what we have been, what we are, or what we shall be, He knows all about us. Men sometimes withdraw their love because they discover in us imperfections which they never anticipated. Thirdly: It is *all-sufficient*. It has at its command ample resources to supply all our wants, ample power to sustain, guard, and bless us through all the future of our being. "He is able to do exceeding abundantly," &c. Here then is a privilege! To be loved by Christ! The words before us present

II. A TRAIL STRIKINGLY SUGGESTIVE. Why did He permit Lazarus, His loved friend, to be sick? First: Not because it was *agreeable to His heart*. The sufferings of those we love are always painful to our heart. Is it not so with Him? "He doth not afflict willingly nor grieve the children of men." Se-

condly: Not because He *could not have prevented it*. He who hushed the storm and raised the dead had power to keep off disease from His loved one. Why, then? It was for some useful end. "Whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth." The afflictions of Lazarus were a blessing both to himself and his sisters. It strengthened their faith and intensified their joy. The words before us present—

III. A FAITH OF REMARKABLE POWER. "His sisters" uttered the words of the text, and they did so what for? To induce Him to visit the afflicted one. They used no argument, they urged no entreaty, they employed no persuasion. So strong was their faith in His love that they only said Lazarus is sick. So assured were they of the genuineness and strength of His love, that they felt that the mere statement of his sickness was enough, that persuasion was unnecessary, and would be perhaps an offence to his heart. True love requires no persuasion, only state the fact. Where there is true philanthropy no persuasion is necessary to relieve distress. The appeals to benevolence that stream hourly from the press, and that are sounded almost every Sabbath from pulpits, imply a sad lack of faith in their authors in the philanthropy of the land. Such appeals are an insult to genuine love.

Subject: BAGS FOR THE FUTURE.

"Provide yourselves bags which wax not old."—Luke xii. 33.

The word *βασται*, here translated "bags," is rendered elsewhere "purse" (Luke x. 4, xxii. 35). "Bags" stand here not for the container of the treasure, but for the treasures themselves. "Yourselves,"—the words are addressed not to the multitude, nor even to the Apostles who had previously left all and had nothing to sell, but to the rest of the disciples. The words are applicable to us in starting on a new period of our history. Let us, as the first grey beams of a new year are falling upon us, attend seriously to this exhortation. Observe three things implied.

I. Most men provide SOME KIND of "bags" for the future. Men have a forecasting instinct and power: they are always looking beyond the present into the future. "Man never *is* but always *to be* blest." His circumstances here require that he should make provisions for the future. In youth he must prepare for the duties and exigencies of manhood, and in manhood he must make preparations for the infirmities and needs of declining life. Were all men to cease making provisions for the future, a few short years at most would bring the whole race to an end.

II. SOME men provide MERELY ROTTING "bags" for the future. "Bags" that "wax old." The *ambitious* man does this. He works for future power and fame; he wishes to reach some lofty pedestal in society, and have his name trumpeted through the world. But fame is a rotten "bag." Men have been here whose names once filled the world; but they have been forgotten long ago. All that we can learn of some of the most famous of them is from some undecipherable Latin, cut on some mouldering stone or brass. This "bag" is not worth having. He who has it not, let him not procure it; he who has it, let him fling it forthwith away. The *worldly* man does this. He works for lucre, and his labour is hard, earnest, persistent. His aim is to provide a fortune, but this, too, is a rotten "bag." It often bursts during his lifetime, and all is lost; it must fall into powder at death, and every fraction is gone from him for ever. The *self-indulgent* man does this. His passion is for pleasure — merely fleshly pleasure; pleasure of the eye, the ear, the palate, the touch; gastric and salacious indulgences. These form his "bag," which he is providing for the future. But a truly miserable "bag" is this; it soon rots. The day will come when they will say, "we have no pleasure in

them;" when all will pall upon the taste; when the choicest banquet will be most distasteful, and when all the orgies of carnal pleasure will be revolting and abhorrent.

III. ALL men SHOULD provide IMPERISHABLE "bags" for the future. What are those "bags"? The question is not left to our speculation. Jesus, in the context, teaches that they consist in practical Christly love. To the young man who inquired the way to eternal life, Christ said, "Go and sell all that thou hast, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven." And Paul calls upon Timothy to exhort the rich that "they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate: laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life." All spiritual treasures then consist in practical Christly love. And how much is involved in this? Love implies knowledge — knowledge of God, and universal being. And here is work for the intellect! for love must be regulated by our ideas. Practical Christly love implies habits of piety and benevolence. And here is work for all the activities of our nature. All the intellectual and moral treasures of the holiest and loftiest creature in the universe are summed up in practical Christly love.

CONCLUSION. — Here, then, amid the doleful echoes of the old year, and the strange and mystic rustlings of the new, I, in the name of that eternity which is about breaking upon us, exhort you to fling from you those “bags” which “wax old,” and to take with

you that “bag” which is imperishable;—that practical Christly love that will enrich your being in all worlds and for ever. This is the “incorruptible inheritance,” this is the “crown that fadeth not away.”

Pith of Renowned Sermons.

No. XXIV.

HORACE BUSHNELL, D.D.

Subject : CHRIST WAITING TO FIND ROOM.

“And she brought forth her first-born son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.”—Luke ii. 7.

IN the birth and birthplace of Jesus there is something beautifully correspondent with His personal fortunes afterward, and with the fortunes of His gospel to the end of time. He comes into the world and finds it preoccupied; room in the stable, but not in the inn. My subject is,—*the impressive fact that Jesus could not find room in the world, and has not yet been able to find it.* I do not understand that this is stated in my text, but that the birth of Jesus is an apt symbol of it. Men’s hearts are preoccupied. See how it was in His life. Herod heard of His birth, and it being clear that there was no room for two kings in Galilee, raised a slaughter generally among the children, that he might be sure of getting this one out of the way. His great ministry wins but the scantiest hospitality; Nicodemus, and many others probably, in the higher conditions of life, felt the sense of some mysterious dignity in Him, yet never took Him to his house or broke silence at His trial by a word of vindication. Martha and Mary did their best to entertain Him, and yet

their hospitality so little conceived Him as to assume that being complimented with a delicate housewifery was more than fitly to receive the heavenful of honour and beauty He brought into their house in His person.

At the descent of the Spirit there was certainly a great opening in the minds of His disciples, which has made slow progress since that day ; but Christ has never found room to spread Himself in the world as He had the heart to do when He came into it, and will not fail to do before His work is done.

Were a man to enter some great cathedral of Europe, survey its vaulted arches and listen to the music of its choirs,—what but this will his thought be, “ Surely the Infant of the manger has at last found room ”? But, looking far enough in to see the pride of self and power that lurks under this gorgeous show, he will confess, “ Alas ! the manger was better and more royal honour.”

So, if we speak of the states and peoples that acknowledge Him,—how unjust their laws, how dishonest their diplomacies, how cruel their wars, how little of Christ is really in them ! Multitudes utterly reject Him : some are in their passions, some in their pleasures, some in their expectations. So that, as the mother of Jesus looked up wistfully to the guest-chambers that cold night, drawing her Holy Thing to her bosom, Jesus himself stands at the door, knocking vainly, till his head is filled with dew, and His locks are wet with the drops of the night.

So it should be, as you will easily perceive beforehand ; for Christianity comes into the world by supposition, just because the world is not ready to receive it. The main difficulty is to get room for its mighty renovations to work. Mankind even shut it away when formally preparing to receive it.

Constantine, for example, brings into the fold with him all his regal powers, bringing everything belonging to Christ into the power of the state. And so is the gospel kept in state pupilage in many parts of Christendom till the present day.

Churchcraft has been quite as narrow a limitation, and the

attempted work of science, calling itself theology, is scarcely more equal to its theme. What can it do, when trying to measure the sea with a spoon? But when the old niggard dogmas of a bigot age and habit give way, and emancipated souls begin to look for a broader, worthier faith, just then everything great in the gospel vanishes, even more strangely than before. Jesus dwindles to a mere man. The Holy Spirit is identical with the laws of the soul. God is shut in back of nature and required to stay there. We are living in nature just as nature makes us live; nothing is left for a gospel but development, with a little human help from that very excellent person, Jesus.

But saddest of all is the practical depreciation of what Christ will do, experimentally, as a Saviour from sin. The assumption is, that Christ will do only a little for us, just as there is only a little done; when the very sufficient reason is, that there is only a little allowed to be done. As to any common footing with the ancient saints in their inspirations, guidances, and gifts—it is presumption to think of it. True, there is no grace of Christ that will suddenly make us perfect, but there is a grace that will take away all conscious sinning, as long as we sufficiently believe, raising us above the dominating power of sin into a state of divine consciousness, where we are new-charactered, as it were, continually, by the righteousness of God spreading itself into and over and through the faith by which we are trusted to His mercy.

Probably nothing comparatively of the power of Christ, as a gift to the world, has ever yet been realised in it. And the main part of the difficulty is, that Christ is a grace too big for men's thoughts, and of course too big for their faith. Multitudes, under the name of disciples, maintain a Christian figure scarcely up to the line of common respect. Until Christ gets room in the higher spaces of their feelings it must be so. Others are inconstant, because Christ is not fully enough received to be the head of their new capacity and growth. Multitudes, again, are not made happy as they should be, for the simple reason that there is nothing so wretched, so close to starvation, as a little doubtfully received grace. True joy

comes by heartfuls, and when Christ is given room to flood the feelings, the peace becomes a river.

And so Christ's followers keep Him back from His victories, making His gospel such a doubtfully real affair that it has always to be debating in the evidences, instead of being its own evidence, and marching forward in its mighty power. Brethren, be no more straitened in your own bowels; expect to be all that Christ will make you. Tell what changes and wondrous new creations will appear when he finally breaks full-orbed on human experience,—His second true coming in power and glory. For this great consummation it is that everything is preparing; and if there be voices and calls chiming through the spaces round us, which for deafness we have all these ages failed to hear, what is their burden but this, "Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lifted up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of Glory shall come in"?

Camberwell.

W. H.

CHRIST WITHIN.—"A stationer being at a fair, hung out his pictures of men famous in their kind, among which he had also the picture of Christ. Divers men bought, according to their several fancies. The soldier buys his Caesar, the lawyer his Justinian, the physician his Galen, the philosopher his Aristotle, the poet his Virgil, the orator his Cicero, and the divine his Augustine—every man after the dictation of his own heart. The picture of Christ hung by still, of less price than the rest; a poor shopman, that had no more money than would purchase it, bought it, saying, 'Now every one hath taken away his god, let me have mine!' Thus, whilst the covetous repair to their riches, like birds to their nest; the ambitious to their honours, like butterflies to a poppy; the strong to their holds, the learned to their arts; atheists to their sensual refuges as dogs to their kennels, and politicians to their wit as foxes to their holes, the devout one will have no other sanctuary, fix upon no other object but Christ Jesus, not pictured in their chamber, but planted in the inner chamber of the heart."—SALTER.

Seeds of Sermons from the Minor Prophets.

If the Bible as a whole is inspired, it is of vast importance that all its Divine ideas should be brought to bear upon the living world of men. Though the pulpit is the organ Divinely intended for this work, it has been doing it hitherto in a miserably partial and restricted method. It selects isolated passages, and leaves whole chapters and books for the most part untouched. Its conduct to the Minor Prophets may be taken as a case in point. How seldom are they resorted to for texts, and yet they abound with splendid passages throbbing with Divine ideas. It is our purpose to go through this section of the Holy Word; selecting, however, only such verses in each chapter and book as seem the most suggestive of truths, of the most vital interest, and universal application.

We begin with HOSEA. The remembrance of some facts connected with this man will greatly help us in our endeavours to reach the meaning and feel the power of certain of his utterances. He was a native of Israel, and lived in Samaria about 700 or 800 years B.C. His prophecy seems to have embraced a period of about 60 years, from Jeroboam's death to Hezekiah's ascension to the throne. He was contemporary with Isaiah, and preceded Joel, Jonah, and Amos. His prophecies are directed almost exclusively to the ten tribes who had sunk into the deepest idolatry. His style, as a writer, is very peculiar. "It is," says De Witte, "abrupt, unrounded, and ebullient, his rhythm hard leaping and violent." Like a bee he has been said to fly from one flower to another, to suck the honey from all the blossoms.

HOSEA.

No. X.

Subject: SECULAR PROSPERITY.

"As they were increased, so they sinned against me; therefore will I change their glory into shame."—Hosea iv. 7.

The "increase" referred to in the text is in all probability an increase in the number of the population. Israel had become a numerous people. But it might also refer to their increase in wealth; this is the application that we shall make of it, and notice three points—

I. Secular prosperity **ATTAINED** by the wicked. They were an idolatrous and rebellious people, yet they had grown rich. Their lands brought forth plentifully, and their merchandise was prosperous.

First: This is a common fact. Wicked men in all ages

from the beginning, have not only been successful in the accumulation of wealth, but as a rule have been more prosperous than their contemporaries. Two things may account for this fact. (1.) Their *secular earnestness*. Material good is the one thing that fills and fires an unregenerate soul, and for this he labours with might and main. The more earnest a man is in any pursuit (his aptitudes being equal) the more successful. The mere worldly man is "fervent" in business. (2.) Their *moral unscrupulousness*. They have no high sense of honour, no inviolable rules of right, no swaying sense of moral responsibilities. Hence they will not reject the fraudulent and the false if they will serve them in their course. Fraud and falsehood are perhaps the chief factors in fortune-

making. No wonder, then, that the wicked become rich.

Secondly: This is a *trying* fact. Men of incorruptible truth, honesty, and high devotion, have in all ages been baffled and distressed by this fact. "Wherefore do the wicked prosper?" This has been their puzzle. Notice—

II. Secular prosperity ABUSED by the wicked. "As they were increased so they sinned against me." Wealth has a wonderful power either for good or ill. With it the truly generous and holy can widen the empire of spiritual intelligence and advance the cause of human happiness; and by it the wicked can increase the corruption and swell the tide of human depravity. In the hands of the wicked wealth can—

First: Promote *injustice*. Wealth gives a man power to baffle the cause of justice, trample on human rights, and oppress the poor and the innocent. Wealth fattens the despotic in human nature. In the hands of the wicked wealth can,

Secondly: Promote *sensuality*. It provides means to inflame the low passions of human nature, and to pamper the brutal appetites. It tends to bury the soul in the warm and sparkling stream of animal passions. In the hands of the wicked wealth can—

Thirdly: Promote *practical atheism*. The man who has an abundance of the things of this life, and who has not the fear of God in his heart, is sure to sink into an utter forgetfulness of the Author of all good. Thus, then, "as they were increased so they sinned against me." A terrible fact this. Notice—

III. Secular prosperity RUIN-

ous to the wicked. "Therefore will I change their glory into shame." I will strip them of all they now glory in, all their worldly prosperity, and give them shame instead. I will quench all the lights which they have kindled, and which glare around them, and there shall be darkness. I will bring them into wretchedness and contempt. "Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee." "I have seen the wicked in great power, and spreading himself like a green bay-tree. Yet he passed away, and lo he was not: yea I sought him, but he could not be found."

"To-day he puts forth
The tender leaves of hopes, to-morrow
blossoms,
And bears his blushing honours thick
upon him:
The third day comes a frost, a killing
frost:
And—when he thinks, good easy man,
full surely
His greatness is a ripening—nips his root,
And then he falls as I do." *Shakespeare*.

Subject: FEEDING ON SIN.

"They eat up the sin of my people, and they set their heart on their iniquity."—Hosea iv. 8.

Dr. Henderson renders these words, "they devour the sin-offering of my people." "The priests greedily devoured what the people brought for the expiation of their sins; and instead of endeavouring to put a stop to abounding iniquity, only wished it to increase, in order that they might profit by the multitude of the victims presented for sacrifice." The priests lived upon the sacrificial meat (see Lev. vi. 26), and the more they had of this the more they were pleased. But this increased with the increase of the sins of the people: the more

the people sinned, the more sin-offerings, and the more sin-offerings, the more priestly banquets. So they "set their heart on their iniquity." That is they longed for its increase, they had an interest in the growth of sin in the country, so that in truth, without figure, they *feed upon the sin of the people*. "The more sins," says an old expositor, "the more sacrifice, and therefore they cared not how much sin people were guilty of. Instead of warning the people against sin from the consideration of the sacrifices, which showed them what an offence sin was to God, since it added such an expiation they emboldened and encouraged the people to sin, since an atonement might be made at so small an expense. Thus they glutted themselves upon the sins of the people, and helped to keep up that which they should have beaten down."

Are there no men now that feed and feast on the sins of the people? We think such men can be found.

I. There are such men in the ECCLESIASTICAL world. There is a class of ecclesiastics who live in palaces, fare sumptuously every day, and roll in chariots of opulence, who profess to be the chief ministers of Him who made Himself of no reputation, took upon Himself the form of a servant, and who, when on earth, had nowhere to lay His head. What is it that sustains these men, keeps up the huge imposture? Simply the "sin of the people." Their *credulity*, their *ignorance*, their *servility*, their *superstition*. Let these sins die out, and these gorgeous and plethoric hierarchs will have to doff their splendour, live on humble fare,

and work as honest men or starve. A story is related of a prelate in Charles V.'s time, who invited his friends to his house, and prepared a hospitable banquet of which they would not partake. "What," said he, "will you not eat of dainties that are bought at so dear a rate? The meat that I have prepared for you is like to cost me the pains of hell." The prelate felt that he was a priestly impostor, misrepresenting the Man of Sorrows, and shamefully neglecting his duty.

II. There are such men in the COMMERCIAL world. There are men who have vested interest in the sin of *intemperance*, brewers, distillers, and traffickers in alcoholic drinks. They live on the sin of intemperance, and raise themselves in hot antagonism against any effort to weaken its power or to limit its influence. There are men who have vested interest in the sin of *war*. The sin of war! The phrase is infinitely too weak. War comprises all sins. It is the totality of all abominations. Yet the manufacturers of armories and war-ships, and traders in the implements and equipages of fighting men, live on this sin. They hail every intimation of war. The first groan of the infernal lion falls as music on their greedy ears.

III. There are such men in the PROFESSIONAL world. What would the *lawyer* do without chicaneries, breach of contracts, thefts, violences, seductions, and all kinds of social immoralities and crimes? What would *popular journalists* do were there were no scandals, no tragedies, no crime, no fraudulent advertisements? What would become of the *sensational novelist* if there

was no sinful love in the people for the horrible and the prurient?

CONCLUSION.—Alas! that men are sinners, but alas! a thousand times more that men should feed on sin! Herein is the great obstruction to moral reformations. Destroy a popular sin, and you destroy the livelihood of hundreds, and the pomp and splendour of many. How shall sin be put away from the world? who shall destroy this work of the devil? Thank God we have the answer!

Subject: THE RECIPROCAL INFLUENCE OF PRIESTHOOD AND PEOPLE.

"There shall be, like people, like priest."—Hosea iv. 9.

Though perhaps the translation of Keil and Delitzsch—"therefore it will happen as to the people, so to the priest"—may give the literal idea, I take the words as they stand, which have become a proverb, "like people, like priest." Instead of taking up the primary idea of the words, viz., that the rank and wealth of the priest would not exempt them from sharing the same fate as the rest of the nation, I would put into prominence, for a moment, the idea of reciprocal influence of priesthood and people. And I make two general remarks on this idea.

I. There is sometimes a DISGRACEFUL reciprocal influence.

First: It is a disgrace to a true priest to become like the people. A true priest—that is, a God-made priest—is a man above the average in brain, heart, being, culture, intelligence, and virtue. He who is not above the average is no

priest, he is out of his place. A priest is a man to mould, not to be moulded; to control, not to be cringed; to lead, not to be led. His thoughts should sway the thoughts of the people, and his character should command their reverence. Sometimes, nay, too frequently, you see priests become like the people, mean, sordid, grovelling. There are men who call themselves priests, that are the mere creatures of the people. The true priest is the prince of the people; his ministry is a "royal priesthood."

Secondly: It is a disgrace to a people to become like a bad priest. There are priests whose natures are lean, whose capacities are feeble, whose religion is sensuous, whose sympathies are exclusive, whose opinions are stereotyped, whose spirit is intolerant. Shame on the people that allow themselves to become like such a priest, and yet the transformation is pretty general. How often one meets in a social circle with those who represent the miserable spirit of their little priest!

II. There is sometimes an HONOURABLE reciprocal influence.

First: It is honourable when people become like a true priest. When they catch his broad spirit, cherish his soul-quickening thought, and grasp his lofty aims, when they feel one with him in spiritual interests and Christly pursuits.

Secondly: It is honourable to the true priest when he has succeeded in making the people like him. He may well feel a devout exultation as he moves amongst them that their moral hearts beat in unison with his,

that their lives are set to the same key-note, that they are of one mind and one heart in relation to the grand purpose of life.

"I venerate the man whose heart is warm,
Whose hands are pure, whose doctrines
and whose life
Coincident, exhibit lucid proof
That he is honest in the sacred cause.
To such I render more than mere
respect,
Whose actions say that they respect
themselves." *William Cowper.*

*Subject: AN UNHOLY ALLIANCE
AND A RIGHTEOUS ABANDON-
MENT.*

"Ephraim is joined to idols: let him alone."—Hosea iv. 17.

"Ephraim," the most powerful of the ten tribes, is frequently used by the prophets for Israel. Notice briefly two things.

I. AN UNHOLY ALLIANCE.
"Ephraim is joined to idols," is welded to them, his heart is rooted in them. What is an idol? Carved wood, stone, or moulded metal, living creatures, flowing streams, or heavenly orbs? No. These are mere representations of idols. The

idol of a man is the object supremely loved, whatever that object may be. Gold, fame, beauty, power, pleasure; whatever the heart is set on, that is the idol. Here in our England we condemn polytheism, but we abound with polytheists. Men have as many idols here as they have objects of supreme love, and they are many. Thousands of Englishmen are joined to their idols, they are chained to them by the ties of their strongest loves and habits. Notice—

II. A RIGHTEOUS ABANDONMENT. "Let him alone." It is a hopeless case. Waste no more time in argument and moral appliances. The time comes with every sinner when he is abandoned, his character is stereotyped, and his doom is settled. God says to Providence, "let him alone," do not disturb him; to conscience, "let him alone;" to the Spirit, "let him alone." When God abandons the soul all is over; when the fountain refuses to pour forth its waters, the stream dries up; when the sun refuses to travel up the horizon, all nature will die.

The Pulpit and its Handmaids.

ORIGINAL SIMILITUDES.

MEMORY.

"Memory gathers up every fragment of our past life, so that nothing is lost. The path through which we have passed, with its thorns and flowers, its

hills and dales, its winding walks, its sunshine and its clouds, we have within us. Again, and yet again, for ever we shall retrace our steps, and penetrate the most intricate

labyrinths of our past way. Years cannot rob the soul. It loses nothing by age, but gains much by every hour. It makes past suns shine, and faded landscapes bloom again. It surrounds itself with the scenes of childhood, calls up the long buried from their graves, and gives them their wonted form and voice. Every day widens the domain of memory, and thus enriches the soul with the treasures of the past. The history of man is recorded, not in books but in souls, and will be seen and studied in the great eternity."

WORSHIP.

"As the earth can only send out her germs of life into blade, and flower, and fruit, as it turns its face to the sun; so the soul can only send out its spiritual energies into perfection, as it turns itself in worship to the eternal fountain of life and light."

JUDAISM AND CHRISTIANITY.

"The Bible is made up of two parts, Judaism: and Christianity, but they constitute but one system—one in principle, authorship, and design; Christianity is but the full unfoldment of Judaism, the germ advanced to the fruit, the twilight brightened into noon, the architectural plan elaborated into a magnificent temple."

THE PLATFORM OF FELLOWSHIP.

"We say we are with a man when we sympathise with him in any great question, sentiment, or aim. Indeed, without

a figure, do we not live with the men who feel as supreme the same thoughts, and pursue as supreme the same aims? Our souls meet and mingle with theirs. The meeting-place of souls is ever the supreme thought and aim. Persons who have not this, though, personally, they live in the same house and room, live not, in the highest sense, together."

MIND.

"Mind seems to me an existent, which in its nature faineth not, neither is weary; it grows young with years and strong by exercise. And no spirit was ever made to work for itself as an end, but to labour always for the common good. Spirit is made to minister to spirit, and God ministers to all."

THOUGHT.

"There is nothing in the universe that has such a power over us for weal or woe as Thought. All impulses and passions of emotion heaving within us, like tides in oceans, are under the dominion of thought; indeed, the whole machinery of mind is at its disposal; it touches every spring and directs every wheel. It forms our character, it determines our moods. A thought lifts us in a moment from gloom to sunshine; or, the reverse, breaks the calm atmosphere into thunder and mantles the sky in clouds."

NATURE AND ART.

"Variety is a characteristic of nature; monotony, of art.

The flower blooming in the landscape, and the flower painted on the canvas; the cedar towering in the forest, and the cedar cut down, carved, and polished, by the hand of art, to adorn some lordly mansion.—how different! The flower and the tree, abroad in the bosom of nature, are changing their forms and tints every hour, but in the cold sphere of art they remain from year to year the same.”

SUGGESTIVE TEACHING.

“Suggestive teaching is the highest kind of teaching, the only teaching of any worth. He who crams the mind of others with his own ideas, however correct, does nothing to help humanity, equal to him who stimulates the mind to create ideas for itself—to think.”

CHRIST THE RESTORER.

“Christ gives no new powers, but restores, strengthens, and perfects the old. He retunes the disordered harps, and makes every string give music at every touch.”

DEATH NOT EXTINCTION.

“The loss of the body is to the soul, but as the loss of the telescope to the astronomer, the harp to the lyrist, the house to the resident. Though the telescope is destroyed, the astronomer lives, and may procure another instrument that will give him a clearer and a broader view of the starry universe; though the harp of the lyrist be broken the musician survives,

and may employ some other instrument, and through it pour forth strains more lofty and thrilling than ever; and though the house of the resident fall to ruins, he may become the occupant of a palace.”

ELOQUENCE.

“Tenderness is the soul of eloquence; it tunes the voice into music; it breathes our thoughts into the hearts of our hearers, and makes them one with us.”

SILENCE.

“The kingdom of heaven comes not ‘with observation.’ It comes not like the noisy cataract dashing from the hills, but like the silent dew, full of life; it comes not as ocean billows come to the shore under the furious blast of the storm, but like the deep river it rolls, unheard, at your feet, and gives life to all who drink; it comes not as the lightning flash, but as the morning sun—silently touching the fields into new life, and melting clouds into luminous ether. The spirit speaks not in the roar of thunder, or the crash of earthquake, but in the ‘still small voice’ of thought, conscience, and truth.”

THE SEASONS.

“A fresh season is Nature’s fresh edition of her old truths. In one season she writes them in buds, in another in flowers, in another in ripened fruit, in another in frost and snow.”

“Winter is Nature’s prophecy of a retribution for humanity.”

Homiletical Brexiaries.

No. XLII.

Subject: PRE-EMINENT MANIFESTATION OF GOD'S LOVE.

"In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God had sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him."—1 John iv. 9.

God's love is manifested everywhere, the universe is at once its effect and expression. But John says, "in *this* was manifested." Here it has a pre-eminent splendour of display. It is seen—I. In SENDING HIS ONLY BEGOTTEN SON INTO THE WORLD. What is meant by "His only begotten Son"? Has He not many sons? Yes, myriads, but none like Christ. Christ's personality consisted of Divinity and humanity, and hence there is none like Him. He stands alone in immensity. "The only begotten." Had the Eternal given us worlds, His gift would not have been such an expression of love as the gift of His Son. It is seen—II. In sending "His only begotten Son into the world," that REBELS MIGHT HAVE LIFE. "That we might live through him." Had He sent Him to wreak vengeance on our heads who would have wondered? But He came that we might live, live *virtuously, usefully, happily, immortally.*

No. XLIII.

Subject: SUGGESTIONS OF LIFE'S VANITY.

"Wherefore hast thou made all men in vain."—Psalm lxxxix. 47.

There are many circumstances in life that tend to impress us with the vanity of our mortal existence on the assumption that there is no future. I. The disproportion between the LENGTH OF OUR EXISTENCE AND OUR LONGINGS. II. The disproportion between our FACULTIES and our ACHIEVEMENTS. All feel they can do vastly more than they can accomplish here. III. The disproportion between our ASPIRATIONS and our ATTAINMENTS. How much knowledge, power, influence we aspire to, but how little do we gain!

No. XLIV.

Subject: GOD.

"My soul thirsteth for the living God."—Psalm xlii. 2.

The words present God to us—I. As a PERSONALITY. That He is as distinct from the universe as the architect from the building, the author from his book, admits of no rational doubt. We believe in His personality (1) Because we have it. Could He give what He has not? (2) Because we instinctively believe it, and (3) Because the Bible declares it. The words present God to us—II. As a LIVING personality. "The living God." The world abounds with dead gods, but *the* God is living, consciously, independently, actively, ubiquitously. The God of modern Christendom is rather the God that was living in Old Testament times, and in the days of Christ rather than the God that is living here in the 19th century, and with every man. The words present God to us—III. As a living personality CRAVED AFTER BY THE HUMAN SOUL. "My soul thirsteth for the living God." (1) The soul is constitutionally *theistic*. It believes in God. (2) The soul is *immensely great*. Nothing but God can satisfy it. It will not be satisfied with His works, however vast and lovely, it must have Him Himself.

No. XLV.

Subject: THE PRESENT LIFE.

"The life that now is."—1 Timothy iv. 8.

What a life is this! I. It is a MYSTERIOUS life. It perplexes us. On all hands and every hour a thousand "wherefores" start up that confound us. II. It is a TRYING life. Personal, social, moral trials beset our path. III. It is a PREPARATORY life. In it we form characters that will translate us to a paradise, or doom us to a hell. IV. It is a SHORT life. Short when compared to eternity, short when compared with the years of antediluvian men, short when compared with the work we have to do. V. It is a PRECARIOUS life. "We know not what shall be on the morrow."

No. XLVI.

Subject: MORAL MADNESS.

"Madness is in their heart while they live."—Eccles. ix. 3.

There is a worse madness than mental. Many men intellectually sane are moral maniacs. Wherein does the madness of the

unregenerate appear? I. In practically ignoring the greatest BEING. He who is ever-present, the all-in-all, in whom all live and move and have their existence, is not in all their thoughts. Is not this madness? II. In ignoring the greatest INTERESTS. What are the interests of the body to those of the soul? Shadowy, transient, trifling. III. In ignoring the greatest DIGNITIES. The dignity of a pure character, moral conquests, and self-sacrificing deeds. These they never recognise. God, eternity, virtue, these are as much hidden from the ungodly world as the most splendid passages in Milton or Shakespeare are hidden from the raving maniacs of Bedlam.

No. XLVII.

Subject: TIMES WHEN THE BIBLE IS PRECIOUS.

"And the word of the Lord was precious in those days"—1 Sam. iii. 1.

Things that are intrinsically valuable are often only appreciated in certain conditions of life. Bread and water are always valuable, but men feel their preciousness only when they burn with thirst or gnaw with hunger. "The Word of the Lord is intrinsically of incomparable worth, it is the pearl of great price, but it is only in certain conditions of life that men get to appreciate its value. What are "those days" in which it is felt to become "precious"? I. In the days of MORAL CONVICTION. When a man is so stricken with a sense of his sin that he cries out, "What shall I do to be saved?" "O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me?" Then the "Word of the Lord" is precious. It answers the question, it assuages the moral tempest. II. In the days of PERSONAL TRIAL. When health is gone, worldly comforts forsake us, and we are left alone on the couch of suffering, we feel the "Word of the Lord" to be precious: it breathes comfort, it infuses moral energy. III. In the days of SOCIAL BEREAVEMENT. When the loved ones are snatched from the heart, and committed to the grave, and our natures are smitten with sore grief so that we refuse to be comforted, then the "Word of the Lord" is precious. It points to a resurrection, it tells of a reunion. IV. In the days of DEATH. When we feel the icy hand of death on the heart, the world receding, and a mysterious future parting its awful folds, then the "Word of the Lord" is precious.

Literary Notices.

[We hold it to be the duty of an Editor either to give an early notice of the books sent to him for remark, or to return them at once to the Publisher. It is unjust to praise worthless books; it is robbery to retain unnoticed ones.]

THE REVIEWER'S CANON.

In every work regard the author's end,
Since none can compass more than they intend.

OUR WEEK-NIGHT SERVICE : BEING PRACTICAL READINGS IN THE BOOK OF JONAH. (No. I.) By Rev. J. S. EXELL. London : Elliot Stock, 62, Paternoster Row.

THE book of Jonah is for some reasons one of the most remarkable books in the Canon. A good deal has been written on it. Volumes of grand sermons have risen from it, or rather been built upon it. An honest, devout, common-sense, and practical treatment of it (as well as of the other minor prophets) has long been a desideratum. Mr. Exell has taken the matter up in a very unpretending, and yet in a very able way. This is the first number of a monthly serial, containing practical readings on week-nights on this book. He has certainly started well, and in these sixteen pages has revealed faculties of intellect and heart that qualify him pre-eminently for the task he has undertaken. His object is to reach and raise into light the great practical truths that run through the book, and this he has done with signal success so far as he has gone. He thinks philosophically, feels devoutly, and writes in a style that is made clear by complete conceptions, and beautified by a glowing imagination.

AN EXPOSITOR'S NOTE-BOOK. By SAMUEL COX. London : Hodder and Stoughton, 27, Paternoster Row.

MR. COX is well known as the author of "The Private Letters of St. Paul and St. John," the "Quest of the Chief Good," and "The Resurrection." This work consists of thirty-one chapters on as many interesting and important Biblical subjects. All these are treated in the author's well-known and admirable style. There are no verbosities or platitudes in this book. The author is a thinker of a rare order, he thinks for himself, and thinks deeply, and brings out from sacred texts ideas which few if any have seen before.

DISCIPLE LIFE. By Rev. D. MACCOLL. Glasgow : James Maclehose, 618, Vincent Street.

THIS volume contains twenty-four discourses, the subjects of which are "Divine Teaching," "The New Genesis," "The Beginning of Miracles," "Brother, Sister, and Mother," "Nicodemus," "At Jacob's Well," "The Leaven of the Pharisees," "The Man receiveth Sinners," "Signs and Wonders," "The Inner Circle," "The Home Mission," "On the Mount," "Teach us to Pray," "Mysteries of the Kingdom," "A Woman of Canaan," "In the Ship," "Apart in the Way," "The Service of Trust," "The Traitor," "Following afar off," "The Three Crosses," "The Risen Life," "The Two Comforters," "As far as Bethany." This is another thoroughly good book. The discourses are short, but suggestive and luminous. The author does not seem to have any stiff Scotch theology, but much of strong spiritual truth.

SHORT SERMONS FOR THE PEOPLE. By Rev. W. S. PLUMER, D.D.
London : R. Dickinson, 73, Farringdon Street.

HERE are thirty-five what may be called sketches of sermons. They are of the same class as the productions of Mr. Jabez Burns. They are not marked by any great exegetic excellence or homiletic ability.

LECTURES ON PREACHING. By Rev. HENRY WARD BEECHER.
London : R. Dickinson, 73, Farringdon Street.

To describe the character of Mr. Beecher's productions would be superfluous, to recommend them would be impertinence. He is considered the prince of preachers, the chief of all apostles, and therefore his thoughts on preaching will not fail to attract and interest all who aspire to pulpit power and eminence. Most preachers have only to hear of this little volume in order to purchase and peruse it.

THE CREDIBILITY OF THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION ; OR, THOUGHTS ON MODERN RATIONALISM. By SAMUEL SMITH. London : Hodder and Stoughton, Paternoster Row.

WE are informed that this volume originated in two lectures delivered in the town of Liverpool, and addressed mainly to commercial men. It consists of four parts, "Rationalism and the Bible," "Rationalism and Miracles," "Injurious Effect of teaching Christianity in too Theological a style, especially to the Young," "Remarks on the shorter Catechism, and generally on the over-exactness of Theological Systems." This is a very sensible little book, written by a man who evidently understands what he is about. It is an admirable volume to put in the hands of thoughtful young men, especially those that have a sceptical tendency.

1. ITALIAN PICTURES, DRAWN WITH PEN AND PENCIL. 2. THE SECRET OF A HAPPY LIFE. By Rev. G. W. CONDER. 3. THE HOME AND SYNAGOGUE OF THE MODERN JEW. 4. MIRIAM ROSENBAUM; A STORY OF JEWISH LIFE. By Rev. Dr. EDERSHEIM. 5. FAITHFUL, BUT NOT FAMOUS; A HISTORICAL TALE. 6. THE DAYS OF THE CATTLE PLAGUE. By Mrs. PROSSER. 7. RAMBLES AND ADVENTURES IN THE WILDS OF THE WEST. By CATHERINE HOPLEY. 8. OLD PATHS FOR YOUNG PILGRIMS. 9. SARAH MARTIN, THE PRISON VISITOR OF YARMOUTH. 10. MARGARET'S CHOICE. 11. FANNY THE FLOWER GIRL. 12. CHARLEY HOPE'S TESTAMENT. 13. LIZZIE BLAKE. 14. THE SCRIPTURE POCKET BOOK FOR 1873. 15. THE YOUNG PEOPLE'S POCKET BOOK FOR 1873. London: The Religious Tract Society, 56, Paternoster Row.

HERE we have an unusually rich cluster of literary fruit from the old and well-known vine that grows stronger and stronger every year in 56, Paternoster Row.

No. 1 namely, "*Italian Pictures*," brings into our homes Rome and the Romans, Naples and Pompeii, Tuscany and Piedmont. We have here the pictures of persons and places connected with these old historic lands, true to life and beautifully executed; and all these are further described by short literary articles. This is a splendid book for the drawing-room table. No. 2, "*The Secret of a Happy Life*" is a gem. Mr. Conder's productions are always thoughtful, genial, picturesque, and often dramatic. No. 3, "*The Home and Synagogue of the Modern Jew*," contains fourteen chapters, the subjects of which are "The Three Great Precepts of Judaism," "Jews in Morocco," "Jews in Belgium," "Jews in Jerusalem," "Jews in France," "Jews in Tiberias and Safet," "Russian and Polish Jew," "Jews in Rome," "Jews in England," "Jews in Holland," "The Feast of the Passover," "Jews in Prussia," "The Talmud," "Unfulfilled Prophecies relating to the House of Israel." The subjects are interesting, and they are here set forth in striking pictures and much good writing. No. 4, "*Miriam Rosenbaum*." This work, like the one immediately preceding, is on Jewish themes, illustrated by pictures and writings. No. 5, "*Faithful but not Famous*." This is a tale, interestingly written, pictorially illustrated, with a good purpose and moral. No. 6, "*The Days of the Cattle Plague*." This is another story, pictorially illustrated, by Mrs. Prosser, who also writes well and for good purpose. No. 7, "*Rambles and Adventures in the Wilds of the West*." The "rambles" of the authoress, as here described, give one a desire to have been with her. No. 8, "*Old Paths for Young Pilgrims*." This is not worth much. No. 9, "*Sarah Martin*." An interesting biographic sketch of a woman whose multiplication would improve the world. No. 10, "*Margaret's Choice*." Another tale. Verily we may say in this age, with one of old, "verily every man walketh in a vain show." No. 11, "*Fanny the Flower Girl*." Another fiction. No. 12, "*Charley Hope's*

Testament." Still another phantasm of the brain. No. 13, "*Lizzie Blake.*" Alas! alas! how prolific is cloudland. No. 14. A very useful little pocket-book. No. 15. Another of the same description, but smaller.

THE BROTHERHOOD OF MEN: ITS LAWS AND LESSONS. By WILLIAM UNSWORTH. London: Elliot Stock, 62, Paternoster Row.

THIS book treats of the brotherhood of men in three aspects—physical, social, and religious. It is a good, thoughtful, practical book.

THE SECOND ADVENT OF CHRIST PRE-MILLENNIAL: A REPLY TO REV. D. BROWN, D.D. By WILLIAM KELLY. Glasgow: R. L. Allan, 75, Sauchiehall Street.

WE confess that we feel but little interest in these millennial controversies, and with the pre-millennial theories we have no sympathy whatever. This little book, however, is written with considerable ability and with a fair and devout spirit.

WANDERINGS IN SCRIPTURE LANDS. By THOMAS ROBINSON, D.D.
London: R. D. Dickinson, 73, Farringdon Street.

ALTHOUGH works describing Scripture lands are numerous and constantly increasing, the work before us, when glanced at, will not be considered a superfluity. Some travellers are more intelligent and susceptible than others, and their impressions and conclusions are worth a great deal more than those of commoner minds. Hence we regard Dr. Robinson's work as one of unusual merit and interest.

LIFE'S TRUE BEATITUDE; OR, WHO IS WISE? A POEM. By Rev. JAMES BASS. Published at Wesleyan Conference Office, 3, Castle Street, City Road.

THIS little book is a poetic delineation of some of the greatest subjects of human thought. Though we think both the rhythm and the rhyme are sometimes at fault, there is much that is truly sublime in conception, tuneful in note, and beautiful in utterance.

THE BRITISH CONSTITUTION AND GOVERNMENT. By FREDERICK WICKS. London: Collings and Appleton, 1, High Holborn; Hamilton, Adams, and Co., Paternoster Row.

THIS book tells us exactly what we want to know about our law-makers. It describes the functions of all the officers of state, political legislation and judicial; the powers of the Crown, the Cabinet, and the Privy Council, the duties of each of the ministers, the constitution and proceedings of

the two Houses of Parliament, the origin and functions of the various courts of law and the principles upon which justice is administered by them. It also describes the constitution and powers of the local governing bodies, and concludes with a brief constitutional history. The work has been designed as a reading book for senior classes; it reduces a profound subject to simplicity, and presents a vast number of facts concerning our political life in a very small compass. This subject has been too long neglected by the schoolmaster, but with this book at his command there will be no excuse for him if the rising generation is not made thoroughly acquainted with the duties of citizenship.

MEMOIRS OF MATTHEW DICKIE. By Rev. W. M. TAYLOR, M.A.

Bristol: Mack. London: The Book Society.

THIS sketch of his life, written by a very appreciating and sympathetic hand, and the sermons and lecture and poems of Mr. Dickie himself, will beautifully reveal to any readers who were strangers, and will vividly recall to those who were friends, the character of one who was eminently "a good minister of Jesus Christ." The fervour, the tenderness, the humour, the imaginativeness, with the complementary clearness, logic, and utter manliness, that are discovered on page after page of this deeply interesting little volume, are refreshing as some mountain breeze or sparkling waterfall of the Highlands which gave him his boyhood's home, and the sphere of his early ministerial life; while the characteristics that are recorded of his preaching and work, and suffering, and death in Bristol, give additional interest to the ministerial memories of a city that can reckon Robert Hall and Dr. Leifchild and James Sherman and the incomparable John Foster among the preachers of the past.

THE SYSTEMATIC BIBLE TEACHER; A Monthly Magazine for Home and School. London: S. W. Partridge & Co., 9, Paternoster Row.

THIS Serial is designed to meet the felt need of the present time in the religious education of the young, namely, the effectual combination of the three teaching agencies—parent, pastor, and Sunday-school teacher in definite Bible teaching. It will provide the teacher with ample and suitable lessons for each Sabbath. It will enable the parents to carry on the work of home teaching, throughout the week, with ease. And, finally, it will enable the pastor to take his true position in relation to all the teaching in the homes and schools of his congregation. He will know what it is in detail, and be able to guide it; and, at the end of each quarter, he may reproduce the whole at the monthly examination. These are the aims of the Editor; and, as he lays out a very thorough method, based on the celebrated and incomparable system of Mimpriass, this Magazine, which is issued as a penny monthly, promises well to do a most important work.

THE HOMILIST. Conducted by DAVID THOMAS, D.D. Vol. VI., Editor's Series; Volume XXXI. from commencement. London: Simpkin, Marshall, & Co., Stationers' Hall Court.

OF all the many volumes of the "Homilist" that have appeared, this is, for some reasons, the most valuable. It contains about 120 sermons, more or less full. Those on the Psalms, the Book of Job, the Prophecy of Hosea, and the Gospel of St. John, are introduced by a considerable amount of critical enquiry and exegetic observations. Besides all these discourses, it contains a vast variety of matter on other subjects connected with pulpit work and efficiency. Estimating the volume by the amount of original and suggestive thinking, rather than by its bulk, it is the cheapest work extant. It would be distasteful to the Editor for the writer to extol the merits of this work, he will therefore simply quote the remarks of one who is acknowledged to be the most distinguished homiletical writer in Christendom to-day: Dr. Lange, Professor of Theology at the University of Bonn. He says:—"This is the *best* and most widely circulated of the books published in England for the promotion of pulpit oratory. It is carefully edited, and replete with solid matter. Its standpoint is large-hearted, above creeds, and evangelical in the widest sense. Its contents fully justify us in recommending it to preachers and theologians generally, and in Germany also."

HINTS AND HELPS FOR TEACHERS AND PARENTS. By J. GREEN.
Hamilton, Adams, & Co.

THIS is a sensible and practical work on Sunday-school and home teaching. The author is evidently master of the subject he has taken in hand. He points out with clearness both the signs of inefficiency in our Sunday schools and its causes, and proposes a remedy withal. We have noted among others, the two following important points insisted on in the work: *first*, that the work of the Sunday-school teacher is to *teach*—not to *talk* vaguely by the half-hour, not to preach to the class, "aiming at conversion," as it is called, but to teach definite Bible truth in such a manner that it shall dwell in the children's memories, and be reproducible in months or years to come; and, *secondly*, that *home-teaching* must be secured before Sunday-school work can have its due effect upon our young. The book is full of excellent "hints and helps" towards effectual Bible training, and deserves to be read by all ministers, parents, and Sunday-school teachers.



Subject : Napoleon III.

HUMAN GREATNESS.

“Let us make us a name.”—Genesis xi. 4.

“Whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased, and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.”—Matt. xxiii. 12.

A “name” is an important thing for a man. By a name I do not mean the appellation by which we are designated in infancy, known by others, and registered in church or civic rolls ; but the reputation we have gained. He who gets a good name amongst his compeers gets a capital to help him in the business of life, and a power which will serve the interests of his children and his friends. There are men in all neighbourhoods who by a long and honourable life obtain a wide moral authority ; their counsel is sought, their judgments are quoted, their decisions settle social disputes, and their names carry weight wherever they are known ; their children use them, and they are passports which win them a ready welcome into the home of strangers. Many an important office in Church and State is gained by men who in themselves may have no intellectual or moral merit, but by the might of a noble name, the name of a relation or a friend.

All men make some kind of "name" for themselves. What the men now in the "land of Shinar" were doing—trying to make a "name"—all accomplish after some fashion or other. Every man gets some kind of reputation in his neighbourhood. His general spirit and conduct get interpreted and characterised in the circle in which he lives. Some men are known as too narrow-minded to consult, too false to trust—known only to be suspected and abhorred. Others get a name about which there floats a sweet moral aroma; men are attracted to it, they rejoice in its influence, and feel an honest pride of any connection therewith. Aye, all of us are making ourselves names—names that are either odious or beautiful, pestiferous or health-inspiring.

Striving to "make a name" as the chief end of life is a grand mistake. This is what the men in "the land of Shinar" were now doing. I am asked, is not ambition an instinct in human nature? Does there not pulsate in every breast a desire to be or to do something so to distinguish ourselves from others as to attract their attention and win their applause? Undoubtedly so. You see it in the child as well as in the man, in the ploughman and mechanic as well as in the chieftain and the king. Men have a natural desire for distinction; but what is the legitimate object? Is it to *appear* great, or to *be* great? Is it to win victories over men, or to win triumphs over error and wrong? Is it by the dazzle of worldly grandeur to wake the plaudits of thoughtless millions, or by high moral virtues to command the respect of the thoughtful and the good? Is it, in one word, to obtain the honour which cometh from men, or that which "cometh from God" only? Reputation is one thing, character is another. In this life of blindness and falsehood a man with a bad character may win a good reputation; whilst a man who has a Christly character

may by slander or mistake be regarded with odium and contempt.

The words of Christ will enable us to discover the right and the wrong direction of this ambition, this desire to be great. They present to us—

I. A GREATNESS THAT COMES TO HUMILIATION. "He that exalteth himself shall be abased." Christ does not here refer to the man who endeavours to exalt himself in spiritual excellence and in the estimation of God. Such an effort of self-exaltation He would commend; it is the right direction of the ambitious instinct. The man who thus exalts himself, thus rises in Christly thought, sentiment, and character, could never be abased. "His path is like the sun, which shall shine brighter and brighter unto perfect day." He refers to the man who, animated by selfishness, labours to exalt himself in the estimation of worldly men. He may do so by brilliant military exploits, splendid intellectual attainments, by vast accumulations of wealth, or by wielding an imperial power over millions; still, if influenced by selfishness, he must be abased. He will be "abased" in the *moral reflections of his own soul*. It is an eternal law of mind that conscience can never be satisfied by achievements the most brilliant, or possessions the most splendid, where selfishness has been the spring of their attainment. The man who has reached the highest pedestal and stands majestic as the idol of nations, will, amid the deafening shouts of his admirers, be liable on his retirement to reflections that will abase him in self-contempt and shame. The selfish sovereign, though adored by his kingdom, will have within that which our great dramatist calls "a blushing shame-faced spirit that mutinies in a man's bosom," and this will cover him in shame and confusion of face. He will be "abased" in the *estimation of all Christly men*. There have been men

in society in all ages—their number is greater now perhaps than ever, and they are destined to increase until they fill the world—who accept the principles of Christ as the rules of life and the test of character. These men see no real glory in the achievements of campaigns or in the 'gorgeous pomp of earthly thrones. To them coronets and crowns, stars and worldly honours, are mere toys, after which only the carnal and worldly scramble. These men see no greatness where there is not goodness, and honour men in proportion as they see embodied in their lives the everlasting principles of love and rectitude. These men stand by and look down with a sublime pity upon the thoughtless thousands who hurrah the greatest fiends if robed in martial splendour or imperial purple. These men will have to write the history of the race one day, and they will reverse the judgment of old historians. The men whom past annalists held up to be worshipped by posterity will be exhibited for universal execration. The Sermon upon the Mount will be the light by which future historians will guide their pen; a light this which makes the splendours of royalties and warriors as contemptible as the flickerings of a rushlight in the open sun of day. The greatness of the world's great men is but theatrical, brilliant in the gas-light of conventional thought, but only tinselled finery in the day-blaze of Gospel intelligence. He will be "abased" in the *retributions of Providence*. There is a moral government over us all, there is a Nemesis that tracks the steps of men. Though the avenger moves sometimes swiftly as lightning and loudly as thunder, his march is generally slow and soft; still he is ever sure. With the stroke of death he begins a righteous balancing of accounts. Swiftly came retribution to these ambitious men of Shinar who sought to "make a name." "So the Lord scattered them abroad

from thence upon the face of the earth." Swiftly, too, moved the avenger towards the ambitious Haman, who exalted himself before his friends, and, parading his wealth, spoke of the glories of his riches, the multitude of his children, and how the king had promoted him even above all the princes. But next day he hung upon the gallows which he had constructed for another. Herod sits on his throne, arrayed in kingly costume, makes a grand oration, and the people shout and say, "It is the voice of a god and not a man." The avenger is there to abase the despot and hurl him down. "Immediately the angel of the Lord smote him, and he was eaten up of worms." The Pharaohs, the Alexanders, the Cæsars, and the Napoleons, whose gorgeous and colossal figures filled the horizon of their age, how are they "abased"! The moral conscience of humanity denounces them, and their bodies mingle with the common dust.

"There the vile foot of every clown
Tramples the son of honour down;
Beggars with awful ashes sport,
And tread the Cæsars in the dirt."—*Watts.*

The words of Christ present to us—

II. A GREATNESS THAT COMES FROM HUMILIATION. "He that humbleth himself shall be exalted." What is humility? It is not that meanness of soul which cringes to the powerful and the royal. This baseness of spirit is general, it is the curse of nations, the foundation on which despots build their thrones. It is a crawling, cringing, miserable spirit this, that takes possession of men; it is a canker in the heart of a people, eating out their independency and manhood. True humility is not a renunciation of personal independence and self-respect. It implies a love for God and His universe that swallows up selfishness. It is a spirit that makes

men feel as nothing before God, but unabashed and brave in the presence of men. Men who thus humble themselves get "exalted" in *their own spirits*. They master their passions, they rise superior to mere personal considerations, they rule their own souls, and are greater than they who take a city. Just as they fall humbly before their Maker they rise in self-respect, in an increase of moral power, in lofty hopes and noble aims, and in the moral approval of their own souls. They are exalted in the *moral judgment of society*. Just as a man makes himself of no reputation and works from disinterested love—unostentatiously and with no selfish motives—does he get enthroned in public sentiment. Thus Job wrought, and mark his exaltation: "The young men saw me and hid themselves, and the aged arose and stood up, the princes refrained talking and laid their hand on their mouth: the nobles held their peace and their tongue cleaved to the roof of their mouth. When the ear heard me then it blessed me, and when the eye saw me it gave witness to me." Why this social exaltation, this enthronement in the public mind? Here is the answer, "Because I delivered the poor that cried, and the fatherless, and him that had none to help him." Why is it that Jesus of Nazareth is getting enthroned in the hearts of men, has established in this world a kingdom—a kingdom that is growing and that will one day subdue all the kingdoms of the world and become itself world-wide? "Being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God hath also highly exalted him and given him a name which is above every name; that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven and things in earth, and things under the earth: and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the

glory of God the Father." This is the true, the philosophic way to get a throne that will last, a kingdom that is imperishable, a kingdom not over the mere bodies of men but over their souls, upheld not by armies, but by loving hearts. The throne that is reached by knaveries, by strategies, by *coups d'état* and bloody wars, is a throne accursed of heaven, doomed to ruin, leaving its occupants to ignominy and contempt. He only who, making himself of no reputation, seeks to indoctrinate his fellow-men with the soul-quickenings and soul-ennobling thoughts of Jesus of Nazareth, becomes a true king amongst men. They are "exalted" in the *friendship of God*. "Thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy: I dwell in the high and holy place with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones." "To this man will I look, even to him that is of a poor and contrite spirit, and that trembleth at my word." "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."

CONCLUSION. The subject furnishes a warning to all who are inspired by mere worldly ambition. The late Emperor of the French, who has just been conveyed to his grave, is one of the most striking examples in history of the vanity of mere worldly greatness. It is not for me to sketch his history, for the leading facts of his life are too well known; nor to pronounce upon his moral character, for who am I, a sinful man, to assume the office of a judge? All I say is, here is a man of considerable intellectual ability, and mental culture, who after years of sufferings, strategies, and hazards, rose, by one terrible blow which filled the streets of Paris with blood, to one of the chief thrones in Europe. For many years he was the idol of his people, and ministered to their

vanity and greed in many ways. He won great victories in battle, and his word was mighty among the nations. At last he embarks in a war that breaks up his empire, and drives him as a refugee to this country, where he dies in a little village and is buried in a humble church. An obscure grave is the only outcome of all. "Once," said the *Times*, in relation to Napoleon, as his body lay in state at Chislehurst, "the ambassadors waited with anxiety for a word from those lips. Once Europe could hardly hold Cæsar and his fortunes: and now a narrow room, a narrow bed, a narrow coffin." He is only an example of hundreds of kings who have figured in the history of our world. Alexander, who conquered nations, was burnt to death in a scene of revelry and debauch. Hannibal, the triumphant hero of a hundred battles, and who all but conquered Rome, the mistress of the world, committed suicide by taking poison, and died in a land of strangers. Cæsar, who is said to have conquered eight hundred cities and slaughtered no less than one million of men, was assassinated where he had won his greatest triumphs. Napoleon I., the desolater of kingdoms and the scourge of Europe, died an exile on the lonely isle of St. Helena. Is not their history, and the history of all such, an illustration of the text that "he that exalteth himself shall be abased"? The records of their fall flame like red beacons on the rocks of history. Ambition, like the fabled Phaëton, towers to the heavens, aspires to the honour of charioting the sun, only to be struck down by the thunderbolt of justice. "Be wise now, therefore, O ye kings!" Learn in time the vanity of all mere human greatness! "Pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall." Worldly ambition puts a man where he ought not to be. His foot is on quicksand instead of on granite rock. He has been borne to his present elevation by the

inflation of his faculties, not by the Divine pinions of his nature. Like a paper balloon, he must collapse, come down, and descend into the mud. Would your majesties have a people whose loyalty would bind them to your persons and your thrones with bands stronger than death? Then depend upon it you must do something more than tell them that you have been to such balls, theatres, race-courses, and questionable sports. You must do something more than give out to them the daily intelligence that you have taken a drive in your carriage, or a walk in your royal grounds; you must do something more than appear in brilliant reviews, or in the dazzling glitter of courtly pageantry and pomp. All these things may attract the momentary admiration of the thoughtless and the gay, but will never give you a firm hold upon the affections and consciences of your people. "Be wise now, therefore, O ye kings!" Adopt a different course—one not only more Christly, but more philosophic, more politic. Be good and try to do good. Do battle with the moral evils that curse your race—with ignorance, superstition, disease, and pauperism. "Abhor that which is evil and cleave to that which is good." Be royal in the grandeur of your thoughts, in the affluence of your philanthropy, in the splendour of your virtue, and in the divinity of your aims! This is the true way to establish your thrones.

Brothers all! let our ambition be to excel in spiritual excellence, beneficent deeds, and social usefulness. Remember that the path of true greatness is not that over which triumphant warriors and haughty emperors drove their gorgeous chariots, but that over which with humble mien and world-wide love Christ and all true philanthropists pursue their self-denying course. The mission of true greatness is to minister, not to master—to give, not to govern; its sceptre is love, not force; its sword is truth, not steel; its throne is in the heart, and its empire over souls.

Homiletic Sketches on the Book of Psalms.

Our Purpose.—Many learned and devout men have gone *philologically* through this *TANAKH*, this book of Hebrew hymns, and have left us the rich results of their inquiries in volumes within the reach of every Biblical student. To do the mere verbal *hermeneutics* of this book, even as well as it has been done, would be to contribute nothing fresh in the way of evoking or enforcing its Divine ideas. A thorough *HOMILETIC* treatment it has never yet received, and to this work we here commit ourselves, determining to employ the best results of modern Biblical scholarship.

Our Method.—Our plan of treatment will comprise four sections:—(1.) The *HISTORY* of the passage. Lyric poetry, which the book is, is a delineation of living character; and the key, therefore, to unlock the meaning and reach the spirit of the words is a knowledge of the men and circumstances that the poet sketches with his lyric pencil.—(2.) *ANNOTATIONS* of the passage. This will include short explanatory notes on any ambiguous word, phrase, or allusion that may occur.—(3.) The *ARGUMENT* of the passage. A knowledge of the main drift of an author is amongst the most essential conditions for interpreting his meaning.—(4.) The *HOMILETICS* of the passage. This is our main work. We shall endeavour so to group the Divine ideas that have been legitimately deduced, as to suggest such thoughts, and indicate such sermonising methods, as may promote the proficiency of modern pulpit ministrations.

Subject.—The Prayer of Revenge. (2.) Utterly Merciless.

“ Let them be confounded and put to shame
That seek after my soul :
Let them be turned back and brought to confusion
That devise my hurt.
Let them be as chaff before the wind :
And let the angel of the Lord chase *them*.
Let their way be dark and slippery :
And let the angel of the Lord persecute them.
For without cause have they hid for me their net in a pit,
Which without cause they have digged for my soul.
Let destruction come upon him at unawares ;
And let his net that he hath hid catch himself :
Into that very destruction let him fall.
And my soul shall be joyful in the Lord :
It shall rejoice in his salvation.

All my bones shall say,
Lord, who is like unto thee,
Which deliverest the poor from him that is too strong for him,
Yea, the poor and the needy from him that spoileth him ? ”

Psalm xxxv. 4—10.

HISTORY.—See page 7.

ANNOTATIONS.—*Ver. 4.*—“*Let them be confounded and put to shame that seek after my soul.*” “*My soul*”—that is my life. The idea is, “Let the men that seek my destruction be overwhelmed with shame and confusion.” “*Let them be turned back and brought to confusion.*” A repetition this of the same idea : “Let them be not only arrested in their pursuits, but repulsed, driven back and defeated.”

Ver. 5.—“*Let them be as chaff before the wind.*” The language expresses the utmost contempt for his enemies, they appear to him only as “chaff”—utterly worthless ; and expresses, at the same time, a strong passion for their ruin—driven before the wind violently, resistlessly. “*Let the angel of the Lord chase them.*” Angels are often represented in Holy Writ as messengers of the divine judgment. (See 2 Kings xix. 35 ; Isaiah xxxvii. 36 ; 1 Chron. xxi. 12, 30 ; 2 Sam. xxiv. 16.)

Ver. 6.—“*Let their way be dark and slippery.*” Marg. : Darkness and slipperiness. Not only let their way be shrouded in blackness, so that they know not which way to go or turn, but let the very ground be so slippery under them that they shall not be able to stand. “*Let the angel of the Lord persecute them.*” The word “persecute” is not to be taken in its present modern meaning—it means “pursue.” The idea is, “Let the messengers of divine vengeance pursue them.”

Ver. 7.—“*For without cause have they hid for me their net in a pit, which without cause they have digged for my soul.*” Here he assigns the reason for his merciless imprecations. It was not only because they endeavoured to ruin him, but they did so without cause. There is no evidence to show that it was without cause ; but were it so, would he be justified in breathing out this vengeance ?

Ver. 8.—“*Let destruction come upon him at unawares.*” Marg. : “Which he knoweth not of.” The idea is, “Let his ruin take him by surprise.” “*Let his net that he hath hid catch himself.*” The idea here expressed is that that should occur to his enemy which his enemy intended for him.

Ver. 9.—“*And my soul shall be joyful in the Lord.*” The meaning is, “If thou wilt damn mine enemies I shall be happy.”

Ver. 10.—“*All my bones shall say, Lord, who is like unto thee, which deliverest the poor from him that is too strong for him, yea, the poor and the needy from him that spoileth him ?*” The “bones” are here, as else-

where, put for the whole man (Psalm xxxii. 3). The idea of the verse is, that in my whole existence will I celebrate Thy praise when Thou dost interpose to crush my foes.

ARGUMENT.—The whole of these verses are a sad specimen of those imprecatory prayers in which David occasionally indulged. (See Psalms vii., xxxv., xlix., cix.) In some of these no less than thirty anathemas have been counted.

HOMILETICS. We have said that the whole psalm may be regarded as a specimen of *revenge in prayer*. “Are these the mere outbursts of passionate and unsanctified feeling, or are they the legitimate expression of a righteous indignation?” We are not a little surprised to find a Biblical scholar of Dr. Perowne’s noble order proposing such a question as this, for is not personal vengeance manifested in every utterance? Still more surprised are we that he should regard such utterances as these as “legitimate expressions of a righteous indignation.” If such language is right in David, it is right for all men. If right in David’s age, it is right for all ages, for the principles of right are immutable. Even in the Old Testament such vengeance was forbidden. “Thou shalt not avenge nor bear grudge against the children of thy people, but thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself” (Lev. xix. 18). There is nothing gained for Biblical truth—on the contrary, much is lost—by attempts to vindicate such language as this. Writers who do so may just as well call David’s adultery righteous adultery, David’s lies righteous lies, and David’s other crimes righteous crimes, as to call such outbursts of personal vengeance righteous passion.

His revenge in the prayer of this psalm we have already seen is despicably presumptuous, and the verses before us lead us to remark that it is *utterly merciless*. There is nothing but hard, implacable cruelty in every utterance before us. Vengeance blazes through the whole.

The mercilessness of this prayer is seen—

I. In the CALAMITIES INVOKED. What are they?

First:—*Shameful disgrace*. “Let them be confounded and put to shame.” Confusion is bad. To have your plans frus-

trated, your hopes disappointed, and to be so put to your wits' end that you know not whither to turn, is a terrible predicament for a man to be in. But when this confusion is associated with "shame," the evil is more intensified and crushing. Shame means conscious loss of personal honour—it means remorse ; it is one of the hottest of hellish passions. I have seen men "confounded" where there has been no shame, and their sufferings have been great enough. If shame had been added to them their existence would have been as intolerable as hell. This is what David here wishes for his enemies.

Secondly :—*Terrible expulsion*. "Let them be as chaff before the wind." Observe the mode of their expulsion :—(1.) Contemptuously, "as chaff." Treated as chaff, scattered to the winds, and thrown away to rot. (2.) With violence, "before the wind." As the light chaff is at the mercy of the strong wind, so let them be before Thy judgments utterly helpless. (3.) Pursued by messengers of divine vengeance : "Let the angel of the Lord chase them"—chase them even to utter destruction. (4.) Driven along a terrible road : "Let their path be dark and slippery." Let them have neither light nor foothold. "The succession of images and figures here is terrific. The representation is that of persons scattered as the chaff is before the wind, pursued by an angel seeking vengeance, and driven along a dark and slippery path, with no guide, and no knowledge as to the precipices which may be before them, or the enemies that may be pressing upon them."

Thirdly :—*Sudden destruction*. "Let destruction come upon them at unawares." Let him have no time to prepare, no time to arrange matters, either for himself or family ; let the stroke of vengeance be sudden and complete.

The mercilessness of this prayer is seen—

II. In the DELIGHT WITH WHICH THESE CALAMITIES ARE ANTICIPATED. "My soul shall be joyful in the Lord : it shall rejoice in his salvation. All my bones shall say, Lord, who is like unto thee, which deliverest the poor from him that is too strong for him, yea, the poor and the needy from him that

spoilth him?" The idea is, I shall be truly happy when all this comes upon mine enemies, when Thy fierce judgments have utterly destroyed them, my very bones, mine whole being will then be rapturous.

CONCLUSION. Seldom has the language of revenge breathed a fiercer spirit, or sounded a note of more ruthless malignity. Can it be justified? No; whatever the most learned expositors may say to the contrary, my reason, my conscience, and theology compel me to denounce it as immoral and undivine. It stands in direct antagonism even to the morality of the Old Testament. "If thine enemy be hungry give him bread to eat, and if he be thirsty give him water to drink, for thou shalt heap coals of fire upon his head, and the Lord shall reward thee." So said Solomon. "Thou shalt not avenge nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people, for thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." So inculcates the law of Moses. How stands it in relation to the character, the spirit, and the teaching of Him Who is the universal Law-giver, and the Great Judge of quick and dead? In utter, in appalling hostility. "When he was reviled, he reviled not again; when he suffered he threatened not, but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously." He died praying for His enemies. No principle in His teaching did He urge with greater clearness, force, and frequency than that of forgiveness to enemies. "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that despitefully use you." And no principle did His apostles attend to with greater consistency than this: "Being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we suffered: not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing, but contrariwise—blessing." "He that cannot forgive others," says Lord Herbert, "breaks the bridge over which he must pass himself, for every man hath need to be forgiven."

Homiletic Sketches on the Book of Job.

The Book of Job is one of the grandest sections of Divine Scripture. It has never yet, to our knowledge, been treated in a purely Homiletic method for Homiletic ends. Besides many learned expositions on the book found in our general commentaries, we have special exegetical volumes of good scholarly and critical worth; such as Drs. Barnes, Wemyss, Mason Goode, Noyes Lee, Delitzsch, and Herman Hedwick Bernard: the last is in every way a masterly production. For us, therefore, to go into philology and verbal criticism, when such admirable works are available to all students, would be superfluous, if not presumption. Ambiguous terms, when they occur, we shall of course explain, and occasionally suggest an improved rendering: but our work will be chiefly, if not entirely, Homiletic. We shall essay to bring out from the grand old words those Divine verities which are true and vital to man as man in all lands and ages. These truths we shall frame in an order as philosophic and suggestive as our best powers will enable us to do; and this in order to help the earnest preachers of God's Holy Word.

Subject.—Job's reply to Bildad. (2.) His language to the Eternal. (b.) Concerning his sufferings.

“ If I say I will forget my complaint,
 I will leave off my heaviness, and comfort *myself* ;
 I am afraid of all my sorrows,
 I know that thou wilt not hold me innocent.
 If I be wicked,
 Why then labour I in vain ?
 If I wash myself with snow water,
 And make my hands never so clean ;
 Yet shalt thou plunge me in the ditch,
 And mine own clothes shall abhor me.
 For he is not a man, as I am, that I should answer him,
 And we should come together in judgment.
 Neither is there any days-man betwixt us,
 That might lay his hand upon us both.
 Let him take his rod away from me,
 And let not his fear terrify me ;
 Then would I speak, and not fear him :
 But it is not so with me.”—Job ix. 27—35.

EXEGETICAL REMARKS.—*Ver. 27.*—“ *If I say I will forget my complaint.*”

In this verse Job expresses the idea that so great were his sufferings that any effort of his mind to assuage them would be utterly futile. He

could not reason them away. He could not in any revelry forget them. He could not get into any circle of thought that would make him cheerful under them, so bitter and crushing were they.

Ver. 28.—"I am afraid of all my sorrows, I know that thou wilt not hold me innocent." The idea here seems to be—I so dread the continuation of my sufferings because they furnish with the evidence they want to prove that I am a guilty man.

Ver. 29.—"If I be wicked, why then labour I in vain?" The word *if* has no right here—it obscures the sense. He means to say, I am wicked, and therefore he would labour in vain to deny it.

Ver. 30.—"If I wash myself with snow water." The pure whiteness of snow would at first suggest that its water was the most pure, and would therefore be best for cleansing: "And make my hands never so clean." Washing the hands was an old symbol of moral cleansing. Pilate, in open court, did so. What the patriarch means, perhaps, by the expression is, that whatever effort he made towards cleansing himself, he would be still regarded by his friends as corrupt.

Ver. 31.—"Yet shalt thou plunge me in the ditch, and mine own clothes shall abhor me." The idea evidently is, Whatever I may do to cleanse my spirit, and to improve my character, God is so infinitely holy that He would so overwhelm me with a consciousness of my guilt, that my very clothes would make me an abhorrence.

Ver. 32.—"For he is not a man, as I am, that I should answer him, and we should come together in judgment." An extension of the idea in the preceding verse, which is, that the infinite superiority of God rendered all attempts at vindication utterly vain.

Ver. 33.—"Neither is there any days-man betwixt us." "There is no umpire between us who would lay his hand upon us both" (Dr. Bernard). He had no idea of a third person who would act as arbitrator between him and his Maker. God was absolute, and there was no appeal beyond Him. "That might lay his hand upon us both." It is not improbable that this may refer to some ancient ceremony in courts where, for some cause, the umpire, or arbiter, laid his hands on both the parties; to show that it was his office to restrain them within proper limits, to check any improper expressions, and to see that the argument was fairly conducted on both sides. The meaning of the whole here is, that if there were such an umpire, Job would be willing to argue the cause. As it was, it was a hopeless thing, and he could do nothing more than to be silent.

Ver. 34.—"Let him take his rod away from me, and let not his fear terrify me." "Oh, that he would take away His rod from me, and the dread of Him no more affright me."—DR. LEE.

Ver. 35.—“*Then would I speak and not fear him.*” Were I freed from this terrible affliction I should lose this awful dread of my God, and speak to Him with filial confidence. “*But it is not so with me.*” Marg.: “I am not so with myself.” There are various interpretations of this short utterance. Some say it means, I am not so as you suppose me to be; you take me to be a guilty man, but I am innocent. Albeit I am held to be guilty by the Most High, and treated accordingly, but I am not so. Dr. Bernard’s translation, I think, gives the true idea: “For am I not upright with myself?” *i.e.*, am I not conscious of my innocence?

HOMILETICS. Up to verse 24. Job had been speaking *about* the Eternal, and he had uttered his idea of what God is in Himself, of what He does in nature, and of what He does in man. From verse 24 to the end of the chapter his language must be regarded rather to the Eternal than *about* Him, and in it he refers to two grand subjects—the fleetness of life,* and the greatness of his sufferings.

The former subject was discussed in our previous sketch. His sufferings are now the subject. As he speaks in various parts of the book very frequently and largely on his sufferings, and often utters the same ideas in almost the same phraseology, it is expedient to pass over his statement in a brief and sketchy way. In the verses before us he seemed to regard his sufferings in two aspects—as too great to render any efforts of self-consolation effective, and as too deserved to justify any hope of relief.

I. AS TOO GREAT TO RENDER ANY EFFORTS OF SELF-CONSOLATION EFFECTIVE. “If I say, I will forget my complaint, I will leave off my heaviness and comfort myself; I am afraid of all my sorrows, I know that thou wilt not hold me innocent.” There are three things suggested by these words.

First:—*A valuable power of mind.* What is the power? The power to alleviate sufferings. “If I say I will forget my complaint.” Herein is the implied power. Job knew he had it. All have it. It is a remedial force that kind Heaven has put within us. The suffering man, by the power of his

* The heading of the previous sketch (see page 10) should have been—“His language to the Eternal, instead of *about*.”

mind, can mitigate his anguish, if not remove it. If he cannot quench the flame, he can cool it; if he cannot roll off the load, he by his own thoughts can make it comparatively light. He can go into a circle of ideas so engrossing and delectable as to experience transports of rapture in the dungeon or in the flames. What is pain but a mental sensation? And wherever that mental sensation may burn, its fires can be quenched in the river of noble thoughts and lofty aspirations.

Secondly:—*A natural tendency of mind.* What is it? The exertion of this mitigating power within us under suffering; an effort to “forget” the “complaint,” to “leave off” the “heaviness,” to “comfort.” Who under suffering does not essay this? Though most men make wrong mental efforts to alleviate their sufferings, most make some kind of effort. They have recourse to novels, social gaieties, if not to Bibles, temples, and holy fellowships. Everywhere the sufferers are endeavouring to bury their afflictions in mental forgetfulness.

Thirdly:—*A sad defect in mind.* “I am afraid of all my sorrows; I know that thou wilt not hold me innocent.” Why did his mental efforts at self-consolation fail? Simply because he had not the inner sense of innocence. He was too conscious that all his anguish was deserved. Though he always maintained that he was innocent of the sin of hypocrisy with which his friends charged him, he always felt that before the Holy he was guilty, and herein was the failure of his mind to mitigate his pain. “The spirit of a man can sustain his infirmity, but a wounded spirit who can bear?” Though a man’s thought, if he is conscious of innocence, can take the prisoner abroad in the open universe, the pauper into the paradise of God, the martyr in agony into the felicity of heaven—yet if he is conscious of guilt his very thoughts will become fiends to torment him.

“Severe decrees may keep our tongues in awe,
But to our thoughts what edict can give law?
Even you yourself to your own breast shall tell
Your crimes, and your own conscience be your hell.”

—Dryden.

He regards his sufferings—

II. AS TOO DESERVED TO JUSTIFY ANY HOPE OF RELIEF.

First:—He feels that *no self-cleansing would serve him before God*. “If I be wicked,”—or, as it should be, I am wicked,—“why then labour I in vain? If I wash myself with snow water, and make my hands never so clean; yet shalt thou plunge me in the ditch, and mine own clothes shall abhor me.” Do what we will, in the sight of Infinite Purity we are filthy. “He charged His angels with folly.” The holiest man on earth feels guilty in the presence of Him Who is Light and in Whom there is no darkness at all.

Secondly:—He feels that *there is no one to act as umpire between him and his Maker*. If he goes directly to Him, his spirit will be scorched with the rays of His purity. Yet there is no help, no third person, no one to arbitrate. “Neither is there any days-man betwixt us, that might lay his hand upon us both.” There is no authority beyond Him, no authority equal to Him, His judgment is final. Thank God we have a Mediator who answers the purpose—one whose work is not to reconcile God to us but us to God. He lays His hand upon us both, grasps the eternal, the immutable rock with one hand and drowning souls with the other, and brings them into the clefts of His loving heart.

Thirdly:—He feels that *his afflictions were directly from God, and until they were removed there was no hope for him*. “Let him take his rod away from me, and let not his fear terrify me; then would I speak, and not fear him: but it is not so with me.” We are prone to ascribe our afflictions to a variety of secondary causes, but the patriarch felt that all his calamities came directly from his Maker—they were His “rod.”

CONCLUSION. What are our trials compared with those that Job endured? And yet do we deserve them less? Nay, can we claim the high moral character which he sustained on the whole? He feared God and eschewed evil, and was an upright man. Let us not murmur or complain. Though our afflictions are light compared with his, and perhaps far more

deserved than his, we have a clearer knowledge of a Mediator, a "days-man," than he had. Clearly made known to us is One—High as the most High, and yet bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh—Who sympathises with us in all our afflictions, and succours us in all our sorrows, and makes even our greatest trials subserve to our spiritual good. "Afflictions," says Bacon, "only level the mole-hills of pride, plough the heart and make it fit for wisdom to sow her seed and for grace to bring forth her increase."

"The good are better made by ill,
As odours crushed are sweeter still."—*Rogers.*

Sermonic Glances at the Gospel of St. John.

As our purpose in the treatment of this Gospel is purely the development, in the briefest and most suggestive form, of Sermonic outlines, we must refer our readers to the following works for all critical inquiries into the author and authorship of the book, and also for any minute criticisms on difficult clauses. The works we shall especially consult are:—"Introduction to New Testament," by Bleek; "Commentary on John," by Tholuck; "Commentary on John," by Hengstenberg; "Introduction to the Study of the Gospels," by Westcott; "The Gospel History," by Ebrard; "Our Lord's Divinity," by Liddon; "St. John's Gospel," by Oosterzee; "Doctrine of the Person of Christ," by Dornor; Lange; &c., &c.

Subject.—The Spiritual Culture of the World.

"Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest? behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest. And he that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal; that both he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together. And herein is that saying true, One soweth, and another reapeth. I sent you to reap that whereon ye bestowed no labour: other men laboured, and ye are entered into their labours."—John iv. 35—38.

EXPOSITION.—Ver. 35.—"*Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest!*" November, December, and January are the sowing

seasons in Judea, and from the seed time to the harvest is generally about four months. "Four months to the harvest" was probably a proverbial expression amongst the Jews, hence our Lord rebuking says, "*Behold I say unto you, lift up your eyes and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest.*" As our Lord points them to the fields, it is highly probable that it was just seed time; and we are thus furnished with the date, to wit: that Jesus had remained in Judea from April, when the Passover occurred, until November. "'I say' forms the antithesis to 'ye say'" (THOLUCK). In the natural world we must wait four months—in the spiritual it is already the time of harvest. The fields were "already white." The spirit of religious inquiry was now at work in the Samaritan mind.

Ver. 36.—"And he that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal." Since the wages of the reaper are represented as given in this world, over against the gathering of fruit unto "eternal life," the primary idea is, the immediate spiritual blessings enjoyed by the harvesters—the communion of the converts themselves" (DR. LANGE). "*That both he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together.*" The spiritual sower, as well as the spiritual reaper, shall have his reward. "Together"—at the same time, and in the same celestial scenes.

Ver. 37.—"Herein is that saying true, One soweth, and another reapeth." Here Christ quotes another proverb. It seems that both the Greeks and the Hebrews had such a proverb. Christ now saw in the Samaritan mind its verification.

Ver. 38.—"I sent you to reap," &c. Some expositors include in the sowers here not only the old prophets, but even the heathen philosophers who disseminated the seeds of truth. "*Other men laboured, and ye are entered into their labours.*" He himself is included in this "other men." The great teachers of past times had none of them laboured at such sacrifice and with such efficiency as He.

HOMILETICS. The grand subject of this passage is the spiritual culture of mankind. Not unfrequently does the Bible represent the great work of moral reformation of the world by that of husbandry. The simplicity of the process, so far as man's agency is concerned, and the dependency of all human effort upon the gracious agency of God for success, the capability of the soul to receive, quicken, and propagate divine truth, and other circumstances, show the appropriateness of the figure. And this spiritual culture is the grand purpose of God in all His dealings with the world. The

relation which is established between the human mind and the outward universe shows this. We come into this world with minds capable of receiving and naturally craving for those truths which nature seems organised to impart. Nature is the husbandman of the soul. The history of the providential economy under which we are placed indicates the same fact. Providence acts here as the husbandman: It ploughs and harrows, uproots, plants, and waters. And still more the mission of Christ to the world attests the same fact. He is the great "Sower" whom the great God sent into the world. He came to make the moral wilderness bloom as Eden. We draw three practical truths from this passage in relation to this subject.

I. THAT THE SERVANTS OF GOD SHOULD EARNESTLY SEIZE EVERY OPPORTUNITY FOR THE SPIRITUAL CULTURE OF MAN. "Say not ye there are yet four months." Don't think the work distant and to be waited for, it is present and must be attended to at once. Think of two facts.

First:—*That moral seasons are not like material ones, beyond our agency.* We cannot hasten the months of harvest. We cannot accelerate the speed of old Time's majestic chariot. Months and years come and go irrespective of our choice or effort. Not so in the moral domain, you change temperature and create seasons, you can turn the foul weather into fair, you can make a moral November as bright and genial as May or June. "Say not ye then." Make no excuses. Another fact to consider here is—

Secondly:—*That the feeblest honest effort to improve the world will develop encouraging symptoms to persevere.* Christ's conversation with the woman at the well seems to have stirred the heart of the whole city. Who can tell the influence of true thoughts truthfully spoken? They increase at once the soul's appetites and the soul's supplies. In spiritual the demand increases with the supply; the more you give, the keener grows the appetite, and the vaster the capacity. These two facts are against all delay. "Say not ye, There are yet four months."

Another truth which we draw from this passage is—

II. THAT A LONG SUCCESSION OF AGENTS ARE REQUIRED FOR THE SPIRITUAL CULTURE OF MANKIND. "One soweth, another reapeth." "I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon." "Paul plants and Apollos watered," &c. The great work is not accomplished at once, it is pursued through the ages. We enter into the labours of those who have gone before, and those who succeed will take up the work where we left off. Thus for example it has been said "that John the Divine sowed seeds for *Polycarp* to reap, he for *Athanasius*, he for *Augustine*, he for *Anselm*; *Bernard* for *Tauler*, *Luther* for *Calvin*, and he for *Chemnitz*; *Wickliff* for *Tyndale*, and he for *Coverdale* and a glorious army of reapers." What does this suggest?

First:—*The moral connection of the race.* As one generation springs from the loins of another, the moral character of the present springs from the moral character of the past. Man transmits his principles as well as his nature. This age is reaping what previous ages have sown, and is sowing what future ages will reap. What does this suggest?

Secondly:—*The slow progress of moral principles.* Humanity requires ages to rise to a full appreciation of great truths. Moral progress is ever slow in this world. What does this suggest?

Thirdly:—*The humble part which individuals play in the history of the world.* We do not reap and sow, one sows, another reaps. What we sow will not appear until we are dust and time has blotted our name from the memory of the world. We pluck a few ripe ears from the great cornfield of life, drop a seed or two, and then pass away for ever. What does this suggest?

Fourthly:—*That results are not the right rules for conduct.* We see more the effects of other men's labours than our own. We cannot tell what will spring up in the world, and grow from what we are doing now. We must leave consequences with the Eternal, with principles we have to do. What is right is our question.

The last truth we draw from this passage is—

III. THAT THERE IS A VITAL RELATIONSHIP between all true workers in the spiritual culture of mankind. "He that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal, that both he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together." How are they united?

First:—*In working out one grand purpose.* Whether they reap or sow, the grand work is the same—the world's cultivation. This divine purpose that runs through the ages unites them all in sympathy and aim. How are they united?

Secondly:—*In participating the same rewards.* "They shall gather fruit unto life eternal." They shall "rejoice together." The true workers of every clime and age will meet and rejoice together. In that universal rejoicing there will be no underrating of the service of the humblest, and the greatest will not glory in himself. Each will rejoice in another's labours rather than in his own, and all will ascribe their achievements to ALL-INSPIRING AND ALMIGHTY LOVE.*

Germs of Thought.

Subject.—The Source of Spiritual Life and Light.

"For the Lord God is a sun."—Psalm lxxxiv. 11.

BY a necessity of our nature we can form no idea of God but through objects and qualities that we know. Love, mercy, patience, wrath, power, intelligence—we could form no idea of these things as connected with God but through our knowledge of them relatively in ourselves.

In the revelation of Himself to man God has always proceeded with a reference to this necessity. Every object in nature, and every calling in society, are laid under tribute as

* For further remarks on this passage, see HOMILIST, Vol. VIII., page 361.

He unfolds the blessed influences bestowed upon those who put their trust in Him. Now, He is the vine, they the branches; now, a strong tower, into which they run and are safe; now, "as an hiding-place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land;" now, the Shepherd of His sheep, and in the text the "Lord God is a sun," &c.

I. We are taught by this figure that God is the source of light and life. Without the sun we are in darkness. Our whereabouts is uncertain, and the objects around us are very indistinctly seen. But when the sun rides aloft in the heavens the darkness disappears, and all nature is revealed in its true aspects. Not merely on either hand, and in front, but in the rear does the light shine. The dimly defined objects, the winding path, the dangerous pitfalls, are brought distinctly to view.

So man without God is morally in darkness. With capacities, and deep craving for the light; yet as to his moral whereabouts, and the significance of the great realities that surround him, he is in constant and perplexing darkness. A darkness not such as may settle down upon the traveller of earth, excluding the light, but producing no apprehensions as to his safety or his whereabouts.

Man without God is not only in darkness, but he carries with him the torturing impression that he has lost his way; and coupled with this is the appalling conviction that the darkness is not God's creature but his own, and that the loss of his way is not his misfortune but his sin, and for all this God will bring him into judgment. Who can look at the endless phases of torture, and sacrifice, and worship among the heathen nations of the earth, without being convinced that man without God is universally under a deep sense of darkness, delinquency, &c.?

And here we must guard against the impression that this state of things is only to be found in heathen lands, and that we, living in a land of Gospel light, are thereby relieved of the darkness and guilt which are the portion of those who

are without the revelation of God. Gospel lands enjoy a light unknown to heathen lands, but it is not the light of God as a sun. It is more like the light of the moon and stars, which has the power to mitigate the darkness and define the road, but no power to call forth the vast possibilities slumbering in the face of nature. A whole summer of moon and starlight could not decoy into fragrant loveliness the flowers of beauty pencilled by the hand of God, which annually renew their birth to gem the virgin robes of nature. The full moon, walking in majesty and grace through the unclouded heavens from now till October, could not weave the web of beauty that is now in the loom of nature for field and forest.* To do this is the work of, not many agents, but one—the sun. Nor shall it, where vitality exists, in a single instance labour in vain.

We cannot appreciate too highly, or speak in terms too eulogistic of, the glorious Gospel of the blessed God. It flings its relieving light into the moral darkness mantling the agitated traveller to eternity. Through its light his moral whereabouts is strikingly revealed, and the great realities around him are stamped with a purpose and a significance of which he never dreamed before. Heaven and hell are launched upon his vision, with the road that leads to the one and the other. The path of duty spreads out before him, displaying the inviting footprints of the Redeemer, and reckoning with the promises and encouragements of God. But, by reason of the natural love of the heart for “darkness rather than light,” all this may be ours without being appreciated, all this may be ours without being in any saving sense understood; nay, all this may be ours without enjoying any of those higher spiritual blessings which God, as a sun, imparts to them that walk up-rightly.

Moon and star light indicate, not the presence of the sun, but its absence. It is caused, as you know, by the revolution of the earth on its axis, which puts the part of it we inhabit into darkness. But, though its light is thus shut off, the sun

* Preached May 12th, 1872.

still lights up the fields of immensity, gives the moon and stars their lustre, and through them sends down upon us its modified and chastened rays.

So the very style of the revelation we possess indicates, and, indeed, teaches (apart from uprightness), not the presence of God, but His absence. An absence caused, not by the Father, but by His prodigal children. An absence caused by voluntarily turning upon the untrammelled axes of the will away from God and duty, into a region of darkness, decay, and death. But God in mercy did not leave man to run the dreary orbit of probation in this stumbling darkness. Through the gift of the Advocate and Days-man a new sky of revelation is brought to view, broad and infinite as the darkness and misery of man. A new sky of revelation, sparkling with the lustrous lights of promise, and the bright stars of an imperishable hope. But these lights, shining in their full strength, have only power to mitigate the darkness and define the road, and supply an impulse to say, "I will arise and go to my Father." This impulse, alas! may be resisted. The road to uprightness, alas! may be a strange and revolting path. In the midst of Gospel light and faithful preaching, probation's latest verge may be reached, while the soul is still wrapped in the gloom of moral winter, and finally be folded in the starless night of desolation forever.

Under the right of property, the refined system of ethics, and the high tone of morality taught by Scripture, intellectual, scientific, and social progress of all kinds may flourish, and institutions for the amelioration of human wretchedness and woe may be highly praised and liberally sustained. No nation was ever truly great and noteworthy apart from the light of the Gospel. Wherever the shriek of the locomotive is heard, or electricity flies burdened with the messages of man, never following, but always in advance, is the light issuing from the Cross, and the voice of one crying in the wilderness, "Prepare ye the way of the Lord, and make his paths straight." But while this light, and activity, and progress are enjoyed by men in the valleys and hills of their nature,

the lofty summits of their being, the mountain peaks of their moral nature, may be locked in the icy fetters of moral frost, and slumbering beneath a mantle of perpetual snow. The vast possibilities which lie slumbering in those high places of our nature, and which distinguish us as creatures capable of God, can never be developed by the activity, light, or progress connected with the merely manward side of our nature.

The mantle of beauty and loveliness which God is now preparing to fling around the gigantic shoulders of nature, will be but the expansion of the possibilities of life now in nature's surface, drawn forth, pencilled, and perfected by the great orb of day, under the guidance of the Almighty Maker of heaven and earth.

So the robe of righteousness in which the saints shall stand amid the unfolding prodigies of the judgment will be but the expansion and development of the vital germs of spiritual life now slumbering in the moral nature of man. No influences in the universe can expand those germs but the vital life-giving influence of "the Lord God as a sun."

Canada.

THOMAS KELLY.

Subject.—The Restoring Power of Divine Forgiveness.

"But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (he saith to the sick of the palsy,) I say unto thee, Arise, and take up thy bed, and go thy way into thine house. And immediately he arose, took up the bed, and went forth before them all; insomuch that they were all amazed, and glorified God, saying, We never saw it on this fashion."—St. Mark ii. 10—12.

IT was in reply to the inward question of the Scribes, "Who can forgive sins but God only?" that our Lord replied, "Why reason ye these things in your hearts? Whether is it easier to say to the sick of the palsy, Thy sins be forgiven thee, or to say, Arise, take up thy bed and walk." And then He proceeded to do this divine act of healing, that they might know that "the Son of man had power on earth

to forgive sins." He had performed the spiritual act of forgiveness, and He interprets and demonstrates that act by an act of healing.

Now the work which Christ performed upon the body of the palsied man was one which men could take account of by their senses—their eyes could see what was done, and they could satisfy themselves of the truth of the action. But that satisfaction of themselves about the truth of the action of healing was intended to be their satisfaction also about the truth of the action of forgiveness. Our Lord intimated that one act was as easy to Him as the other. Moreover, He showed that there was a correspondence between the two acts which would make the outward and visible set of circumstances explain the inward and spiritual ones: bodily healing interprets the restoring power and process of God's forgiveness. In both cases there was the necessity for the renewal of health; in both cases there was the restoration which it was the gracious disposition of our Redeemer to bestow. We proceed to consider, then, first:—The paralysis of sin which corresponds to paralysis of body. Second:—The renewal of forgiveness, which corresponds to bodily restoration from paralysis.

I. *The paralysis of sin which corresponds to palsy of body.* The first thing which Christ did to this palsied man was to impart forgiveness to him, which implies that the man needed that gift. There was a spiritual palsy which could only be removed by forgiveness. Unless this be the case, the connection of the healing of the body with the forgiveness of the spirit is inexplicable and inconsecutive. The palsied man had not, before he was brought to Christ, realised the inward and spiritual blessing of divine forgiveness. Sin, therefore, had benumbed his spiritual powers. We do not know that he was conscious of his spiritual paralysis, but our Lord met his need, and not the mere state of his self-consciousness. The inward life of the man had been one of *painful disorder*, and therefore of unrest and misery; there had been no healthy outcome of life, either man-ward or God-ward. Powers un-

employed in God's service or man's had been instruments of pain : he was destitute of the power which pardon alone could bring to him.

This is the case of all of us. We all suffer from the dreadful evil of spiritual paralysis. Whether we are conscious of the fact or not, we are unrestored whilst we abide in sin. There is a fearful decrepitude of spirit, which unfits for the performance of the work of God to which we are called. As we do our daily work we become more and more aware of our inability to be what we nevertheless feel we ought to be, and to do what we ought to do. The evil of weakened and disordered powers is that which each man feels, both the best and the worst. In such a condition we are all, to whom the good news of God is preached, brought to Christ, who knows our disease better than we know it ourselves, and our condition excites His commiseration.

II. *The renewal of spirit which is brought by divine forgiveness, and which corresponds to bodily healing.* By the restoring power which went forth with Christ's word, the physical powers of the palsied man were renewed, and he, in consequence, was able to arise and exert his strength, and carry his bed. The change was patent. The witnesses could only glorify God for what was done. Did they perceive the *inward cure* by the outward one? If not, they failed to learn what Christ intended to teach. The healed man went home and shared in all the abilities and amenities of daily life. Spiritually and physically healed, he was a new man, and a witness of the saving power of Christ. So is it ever with the receivers of Christ's forgiveness, which is health to the soul and the spirit. Christ's forgiveness is the possessed power of spiritual action and endurance, so that Christ's forgiveness must be the reception into the spirit of Christ's power of life, of forgiveness, and of love. Refusing that forgiveness, we refuse the only possible restoration to spiritual health and enjoyment. In Christ alone we are restored.

W. PERCIVAL.

The Preacher's Scrap Room.

FOREIGN MISSIONS.

AS the subject of "foreign missions" pre-eminently concerns preachers,—they being its constant advocates and generally its directors,—we have thought it just to them to supply in this place an extract on the subject from a leading article in the *Times* of December 21st, 1872 :—

The simple fact with regard to the Missions of the Church of England is that they occupy a very inconsiderable place in the interest and even the information of good and zealous Church people. There really is no human enterprise possessing organisation, receiving subscriptions, and publishing "Reports," that has so little to show for itself in the way of fruits, or in the less palpable influences with which it might be credited. There are Colonial Bishops whom everybody, from the Prime Minister to a Metropolitan curate, takes a particular pleasure in depreciating. It must be confessed that they seem to prefer the pavement of Pall Mall to either Africa or America or Polynesia, whichever may be the scene of their triumphs, if any. Some years ago a great number of them collected at Lambeth, and did or said something, nobody would now venture to say what. Upon an occasion, somebody can be produced who can tell of wonders done in some cities or villages in India a very long time since, with a careful reticence as to the last half or quarter century. The most remarkable part of the business is the almost total absence from English society, of all grades, of the persons who could tell us something about it. There ought by this time to be many returned missionaries, and even converts; nor ought they to be ashamed of their position. But who is there who can number among his personal acquaintance a man who has done some years, or a single year, of Church missionary work, in any field? An ordinary Englishman has seen almost every human or brute native of foreign climes, but few can say that they have seen a missionary or a Christian convert. Dr.

Selwyn went out a good man and came back a good man, and, what is more, still a vigorous believer ; but, fortunately, he has something else to do than to tell New World stories. Fortunate, most fortunate, are they who die in their work, and achieve a martyrdom, if not a conquest. Latterly, we are told, the Church of England has thrown off a good deal of its peculiar system, and adopted a more open formation ; but we all know it is quite possible for a stupid peer to throw off his coronet and yet be a stupid man, and even for a clergyman to take off his gown without being the wiser, the wittier, or the better without it. Titles have nothing to do with the matter. There must be something else in the way when the Missions of the Church of England are such a failure. They are a miracle that never succeeds. The rock will not flow, the rod will not blossom, the manna will not fall, the water will not divide, the iron will not swim, the myriad expectants of miraculous relief have still to bear their burdens. The very surface of the world itself is changed by material miracles, but the spiritual work that should surpass them all lags centuries in the rear.

It is nothing more or less than an article of faith to believe that the fault is not in the people who should be converted, but in those who should convert them. Indeed this, we should hope and suppose, is one of the confessions expressed or implied in the Special Services sanctioned by the Bishops yesterday. There never can be any question whatever as to the readiness or the fitness of the masses, under whatever name they may be classed or described. If the blame of ill-success is once to be thrown on the hearers, or those who will not even hear, we may as well shut up our churches at home, or open them only to the favoured few. We are not at liberty to assume that the mass of the metropolitan population is utterly proof against the teaching and invitation of the Gospel. The command is to teach and preach, and to gather into the fold ; and if success follows not, it must be because the command is not obeyed as it should be. Again, the Church of England will not say that it is doing more for the remote heathen than it is doing for our own people at home. Nor will it say that it has more hopes of the conversion of the heathen than it has of our home masses. If, then, she fails at home, how much more abroad ! If on the spot, how much more ten thousand miles off ! If with a church every quarter of a mile, how much more when the station is a log hut in a forest or a wilderness, a day's journey or voyage from any other station ! If at points where an army of preachers can

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be gathered every day, how much more when one solitary voice has to stammer in some barbarous and ill-understood dialect to a whole race utterly ignorant and unprepared for the matter he is stammering about! Grant that political or physical difficulties have interposed barriers hitherto. All that is of the past. The human race is convertible and to be converted. There only wants the converter, such is our faith. It may be said there are many in the field. It may be added, too truly, that there is not a Church, or a Denomination, or a body of Christians known by no specific name, that has not more success than the Anglican Church. Wherever it goes it seems to work in fetters, and as if it was a performance to be done and not a work to be accomplished and a harvest to be gathered in. In our artificial state of society a man may be respectable and even a favourite, though the veriest creature of fashion, of system, or routine. It is no inconsiderable art to be well up to a professional etiquette. It is pardonable to err by routine and to fail with the justification of precedent. Though a drug or a course of treatment has never been tried without a fatal result, if it is in the books it must be persisted in, and the books must bear the blame. There is a picturesque dignity in being thus prepared for the worst, and infallible even in fallibility. Such a nation is armour-plated, like its own ships; and impregnable so long as it ventures not out over the great deep. But there will arise the question whether this is indeed the frame and preparation for the spiritual conquest of the human race. Once on a time a man landed on the shores of Europe determined to convert it, and he did convert, for his work is done after some sort, if not quite as it should be. But it needs no research, no knowledge of the dead languages, no critical power, not even scientific theology, to observe that the Apostle to the Gentiles had a froer way of doing things than finds favour in our high ecclesiastical circles. Fortunately he had nothing to do with a society. When he was busy at the great centres of Greek and Latin civilisation preaching to Jews, idolaters, philosophers, imperial households, and all the civilised world, the only persons from whom he was receiving messages, consolations, and money were a small company of very simple folks in a Macedonian town, wont to pray at the water side, the only individuals known among them being a woman who sold dyed cloth and a gaoler.

Are we saying this to discourage? Nay; rather to tell our good people that if they have not succeeded hitherto, they may yet succeed in other ways. There has hitherto been

a certain stiffness—woodenness, one may say—in the methods employed for a work which, of all works, ought to be quite clear of other trammels than those of utility and truth. We see no reason why our missionaries should give up any race or any region as inaccessible. The Church of England, so far as we understand, does utterly give up large regions, on the ground that in tropical climates there will be either polygamy or an equivalent disregard of marriage ties, and that no preaching can ever prevail against it. Yet, they who interpret history by the key of Providence tell us the Gospel was first preached at the very rendezvous and trysting-place of continents, races, languages, and literatures—which Palestine certainly was—in order to illustrate its effect on all phases of the human constitution. All nations are represented in that primitive group, and the most zealous, if also the most ascetic, forms of Christianity were those that prevailed and long continued to prevail in races and climates now said to present insurmountable obstacles. The Church of England has its effect, and its mission, upon certain forms of character, certain classes, certain social conditions. Other churches and communities have like special successes on their own grounds. Cannot all work together, recognising one another, doing all justice to one another, and perhaps learning from one another? The missionary report we want in these days is one which will tell us that all this is done in the name of our common Leader, whatever the other names brought in. But this sends us further on for hopes of success and explanations of failure. It is England itself, or the whole people of these isles, that ought to be the missionary. We cannot, or do not, convert our own people. They spread themselves over the world, following everywhere the bent of their own nature, doing their own will, following their own gain—too generally doing and being nothing that a heathen will recognise as better than himself. These preach something and have their own mischievous mission. They preach irreligion and the views that go with it. Their Gospel does its work and reaps its fruit. How can a feeble missionary, who would too often be thought but a poor creature at home with every advantage in his favour, hope to stem with a few phrases the torrent of profligacy he finds already in possession of the ground? The great work is to convert our masses at home. When they are converted, our few missionaries, scattered here and there, will find their race and language a help to them instead of a difficulty and a shame. Let nothing be stopped. Nothing will be stopped. These operations go on by a momentum of

their own. In that sense charity never fails. But if England is to be the salt of the earth, it must keep its own savour, or see the best efforts of its societies, its money, and even its prayers all thrown away.

THE UNIVERSITY FOR WALES.

S this is a subject that will be of undoubted interest to preachers who are found everywhere the most zealous and proficient promoters of the mental and moral culture of young men, we insert here the following letter which appeared in the *Standard* and *Daily News* of October 18th, 1872, designed to correct misrepresentations as to the origin of the University at Aberystwith.

SIR,—At the *grand* public breakfast in the great dining-hall of the College at Aberystwith, an account of which appeared in the *Times*, Mr. Osborne Morgan is represented to have said that, “he believed twenty years a day since, Mr. Hugh Owen, Mr. Sandford (the late member for Chester), and himself, met for the purpose of starting the University College movement. He thought they must now feel as Columbus did when, after tossing about in the Atlantic for weeks and months, he set foot on the firm earth of America.”

Now I am far enough from wishing to deprive Mr. Osborne Morgan, Mr. Hugh Owen, or any other great “Columbus” of that meeting, of the credit of originating any great ideas, or projecting any enterprises to bless the world; but facts must not be sacrificed to the vanity even of Mr. Hugh Owen, or any other mighty discoverer who has been “tossing about in the Atlantic” of great ideas. The facts are simply these:—

When the Congregational Dissenters were celebrating the bicentenary of the Bartholomew ejectment—and the opportunity was employed to gain funds for denominational purposes—being in Wales at the time, I wrote letters to the *Cambria Daily Leader*, urging my countrymen to commemorate the event in a national rather than in a denominational way; and proposed to them the desirableness and feasibility of providing a University for Wales. Dr. Nicholas, then President of the Presbyterian College at Carmarthen, read my communications, and so heartily sympathised with the scheme they propounded, that he wrote a most able pamphlet on the subject. This

pamphlet was put in circulation, and won many adherents to the movement. A short time afterwards the writer called on me on the subject. A meeting was decided upon. The first resolutions proposed and carried at the *first* meeting were dictated by me and written in my own library. At the meeting, presided over by the late W. Williams, Esq., M.P. for Lambeth (who subscribed £1,000), I moved the resolutions both inaugurating the scheme and appointing Dr. Nicholas as secretary. The secretary set to work in earnest, canvassed Wales for subscriptions, and after years of devoted labour obtained sufficient funds to purchase the building. It is only fair to that gentleman to say that had it not been for his very indefatigable labour and able advocacy, the "Columbuses would have been tossing about in the Atlantic" to the end of their lives.

I subscribed my mite to the undertaking, remained on the committee for years, and attended as a deputation at the public meeting at Aberystwith, when we took possession of the building, with the Lord-Lieutenant of the county in the chair.

These are facts well known and undeniable.

Since the building is so heavily mortgaged, and at so high a rate of interest, there is no credit, of course, in claiming a connection with it in its present state, still the facts should be known.

I am convinced that unless the Government will undertake its management, the mighty "Columbuses" will never "set foot on the firm earth."

Yours, &c.,

DAVID THOMAS.

Amongst the communications sent to us protesting against the credit which the gentlemen at the University meeting monopolised to themselves, and dealing with the evidence upon which a proper judgment can alone be arrived at, is one from the original proprietor of the *Cambria Daily Leader*. Therein he says: "I remember well Dr. Thomas sending his University letter to the *Leader*. Nothing of the kind suggested in the letter had ever been suggested in Wales before. This at least was what the numerous newspaper correspondents who followed up Dr. Thomas's advocacy of the University stated at the time, when they received the idea as a novelty, and complimented him as its author. I quite recently had an opportunity of conversing with the gentleman who was the editor of the *Leader* at that period—an author of merit, and a journalist of ability—and his recollection of these facts

was so vivid, and his love of historic accuracy so strong, that I found he had actually addressed a communication to one of our newspapers by way of correcting some of the recent statements which vain men had propagated for their self-glorification. It is, also, in my recollection that Dr. D. Thomas, after his University letter appeared in the *Leader*, saw Dr. Nicholas on the subject of it; induced Dr. Nicholas to write a series of letters in its further advocacy; procured admission for those letters in the columns of the *Leader*; and, from time to time, followed up their arguments with paragraphs, suggestions, and in a variety of ways. Those letters were, afterwards, reprinted in a pamphlet as from the *Daily Leader*; and a reference to their date, and to the letter of Dr. Thomas, supplies chronological evidence which is indisputable. Moreover, at the great meeting in the Town Hall, Cardiff, reported in the *Cardiff and Merthyr Guardian* of 7th April, 1865, and at the great meeting at Swansea, reported in the *Swansea and Glamorgan Herald* of June 26, 1867, and both of which were held to advocate this University, the origin of the movement was always, in my presence, ascribed to the real founder when conversation with individuals touched upon that topic.

"Never until now has there been an attempt to make the offspring forget its parent. And within my own knowledge this attempt is made by one gentleman who opposed the University persistently until it was opened; by a second, who for years would not spare five minutes for a committee meeting, or for an interview on the subject; and by a third who, to retain his own position, played a number of antics which disheartened or repelled all those who were eager to start the University work as it should have been started, as a glorious success in 1868." The writer, who is well and personally acquainted with all the matters to which he refers, then proceeds to comment on the conduct of these gentlemen, in a way which his relationship to one whom he considers has been wronged would amply justify. But, as we are now merely concerned with the historic facts of the case, and not at all desirous of commenting on the honesty of the proceedings of those who are craving for fame in this matter, we shall not pursue that part of the subject. There is, however, much truth in his concluding observation, "that if poor illiterate persons are made to endure heavy punishment for obtaining even a trifle under false pretences, it would seem unreasonable that educated men should go un-

detected and unpunished when they by deceit, simulation, and false pretences ask for and obtain the honours which belong to another man, and adroitly appropriate to their decoration the laurels which should adorn another brow than theirs."

Biblical Criticism.

"For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God."—Hebrews xi. 10.

THIS verse brings into view a third and the principal proof of Abraham's faith. His faith was shown in leaving his native country, to obtain a promised possession in another land. It was also shown in that other land, in his continuing to sojourn as a stranger. But the brightest display of it was made in his looking forward to another world. Ἐξεδέχετο γὰρ τὴν τοῦ θεοῦ πόλιν. The city here meant is the new Jerusalem, the spiritual residence of the blessed. Grotius, Sykes, Dindorf, and others, conceive that reference is made to some city in Palestine, and that the patriarch's hope was realised when his posterity obtained possession of the city of David. For the time he was content to dwell in tents, but by-and-by he expected that he or his posterity would be able to build a city, and assume something like the appearance of a settled nation. But this idea is utterly opposed to the whole structure and language of the verse. The expected city is described as one having foundations, that is, as stable and enduring. Now, no doubt this might be said of Jerusalem as compared with tents; but it is much more applicable to the new Jerusalem, which is never to be shaken. But the second part of the description shuts out all doubt whatsoever; for it is added, ἡ τεχνίτης καὶ δημιουργὸς ὁ θεός, whose builder and maker is God. Δημιουργός occurs nowhere else in the New

Testament, nor at all in the Septuagint, and but once in the Apocrypha (2 Macc. iv. 1). It is frequent, however, in the Greek writers, by whom it is applied to any kind of workman; and in the later Greek it is used as a common designation of God, as Creator of the universe. Now, what kind of city must that be which has God Himself for its founder? We have seen already that the apostle places fabrication by man in opposition to fabrication by God, and things made with hands are distinguished from the works of God (chap. viii. 2, ix. 11, 24). The city, therefore, which Abraham expected was not one reared by art or man's device; it was not of this world, it was in heaven.

This is a verse of great importance. It shows that Abraham's faith did not merely look to future temporal blessings, but to blessings beyond this earthly scene. The expectation of these was the soul of his faith. In Genesis, however, there is mention made of no land but Canaan in the promise. It follows, therefore, indubitably, that the earthly Canaan, in accordance with the typical and symbolical mode of exhibition so common in ancient times, must have been so presented to Abraham, that he was enabled to recognise in it a type of the heavenly world. What God said with regard to an earthly settlement, he must have understood as referring both to an earthly and a heavenly inheritance. And in this view the postponement of the earthly blessing acquires a striking significancy. It not only tried Abraham's faith, but also became the means of confirming it. For, having the conviction that God had spoken to him, and made him promises, he would feel, the more the earthly blessings were deferred, the deeper persuasion that the principal reference of God's words must have been to another state of being. If the promised earthly possessions had come to him at once, he might have been tempted to imagine that they exhausted the promise. His residence as a stranger in Canaan would make him more and more sensible that something not yet visible was wrapped up in God's words, and thus a spirit of patient waiting would be exercised.

And then, again, with regard to Abraham's posterity, who had not the same personal knowledge of the fact of the promise as himself, the postponement of the earthly part of the blessing would in the end acquire a convincing and confirming power; for when they saw it come after years of waiting, they would feel the persuasion that the more ethereal blessing which they had been taught to view as enclosed and wrapped up also in the promise, although from its nature not capable of being seen by them here, would certainly be bestowed in the future world. When two things are promised together, a visible and an invisible, an earlier and a later, the bestowment of the visible and the earlier becomes a pledge that the other also shall in due season be conferred. A proof of the same kind we find in our Lord's curing the palsied man, to make it apparent that His power of forgiving sins was not a vain claim.

It has been maintained by many, that the Old Testament does not embrace the slightest reference to a future state, that the ancient saints knew nothing at all of immortality or of heaven, and that all the sanctions and promises which were addressed to them were purely of an earthly kind. This idea stands in direct contradiction to the verse before us, and also to what is said in ver. 16, and in chap. xii. 22, 28, xiii. 14. And those who maintain this view are guilty of overlooking the process by which abstract and spiritual ideas are generated in the mind. At first men's notions are altogether sensuous. To them the concrete alone exists, the abstract is quite unknown. Outward and visible things are the only vehicles through which it is possible to impart ideas. Hence language at first is wholly taken up with what is material and sensible; and hence, too, the universal prevalence of parabolical, and typical, and symbolical instruction. Now, in the Pentateuch we have a record of the means whereby God trained His ancient people, and gradually laid a foundation for the evolution of ideas which are now clearly exhibited under the Gospel. By washings and separations, and setting objects apart to certain uses, the ideas of purity, and holiness, and dedication to God were evoked. Now,

we can conceive these and similar ideas, and speak of them, quite irrespectively of those earthly and visible adjuncts; and forgetting that it was not possible to do so at first, we hastily draw the conclusion that the ideas themselves must have been utterly unknown, because not expressed in the same manner as now, and we reduce the symbolical exhibition of them to a mere description of earthly things. The earthly Canaan promised to Abraham was designed to awaken the idea of a heavenly land; and the circumstance that he remained a stranger and a sojourner in it all his days, would oblige him, unless he relinquished his faith, to conclude that there was more in the promise than met the ear. But we now have the ideas of immortality and a heavenly country, quite irrespectively of any promise of an earthly Canaan: therefore we will have it, that the promise of a country to Abraham was never anything more than the promise of so many acres of land! Just as rationally might the builder, who has employed a scaffolding to aid him in raising an edifice, when he has reached the summit and laid the last stone, throw down the scaffolding and maintain that it never had any connection with the building at all, nor was calculated to suggest the idea of anything beyond itself.

W. LINDSAY, D.D.

The Preacher's Finger-Post.

Subject: MORAL IMITATION.

"Follow me."—John x. 27.

The following remarks will show the importance of imitating Christ.

I. That man's moral character DETERMINES HIS DESTINY. "As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he" in his

experience, whether happy or miserable; in his *prospects*, whether terrific or inviting; in his *influence*, whether useful or pernicious; in his *relation to God*, whether approved or condemned—to the *universe*, whether a blessing or a curse. Out of character springs destiny, blooms the

Paradise or flames the Gehenna. It must be ever so. As is the moral state of the soul, so is God, and the universe to it.

II. That man's moral character is FORMED ON THE PRINCIPLE OF IMITATION. So strong is the imitative instinct in children that they draw, as it were, the ruling spirit of those around them into themselves, and it shows itself in their tones, their prattle, and their gait. The seed of a child's action is not in the principle his parents inculcate, but in the acts he performs. "Example," says Melville, "is like the press, a thing done is the thought printed; it may be repeated if it cannot be recalled. It has gone forth with a self-propagating power, and may run to the end of the earth, and descend from generation to generation." The ancient Romans recognised this force of the principle of imitation in their youth, and hence placed in the vestibules of their houses the busts of their great men, that the young might be reminded of their noble deeds and illustrious virtues. Parents mould the character of their children, and hence families have a likeness that is moral as well as physical.

III. That the FORMATION OF A GOOD CHARACTER REQUIRES A PERFECT MODEL. It is said that Sir Joshua Reynolds, the

great painter, found, after years of studying his art, that he had been imitating, not Titian, whom he had desired to make his model, but the production of one who had forged his style. On this he resolved to make nature his model, and thus he himself became a great master of the art. Man morally must have a model, and according to his model so will he be. One reason, perhaps the chief, why the moral character of men, the world over, has been, and still is, so depraved and undivine, is because the world for four thousand years never had a perfect model, and that now the only perfect model is but little known and less appreciated.

IV. That the ONLY PERFECT MODEL is JESUS CHRIST. Some have said that He is too sublime a character, too "separate from sinners," to be imitated by man. But this is a mistake. No character is so imitable as the character of Jesus of Nazareth. Who is the most imitable character? I answer—

First:—He who has the *strongest power to command my admiration*. We always imitate men in proportion to our admiration for them.

Secondly:—He who is most *transparent in character*. We can never become thoroughly like one whose character is shadowy and vague, whose

leading principles and aims are not salient.

Thirdly:—He who is *most unchangeable in the spirit that animates him*. We can never become thoroughly like a man who is constantly changing, for, if we resemble him to-day we shall be unlike him to-morrow. I maintain that we cannot completely become like any one in character who has not the power of commanding our highest admiration, who is not transparent in spirit and unchangeable in purpose. Christ alone is all this. Hence He is infinitely the most imitable model.

CONCLUSION.—“Follow me”—this is an epitome of all the moral laws of God concerning man. Herein, too, is man's life and perfection. Imitate Him, not by trying to do what He did, or talk as He talked, but by inbreathing that moral spirit of His which gives Him a name above every name.

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Subject: BARZILLAI THE GIDEONITE; OR, THE INFLUENCE OF AGE.

“And Barzillai said unto the king, How long have I to live, that I should go up with the king unto Jerusalem? I am this day fourscore years old; and can I discern between good and evil? can thy servant taste what I eat or what I drink? can I hear any more the voice of singing-men and singing-women? wherefore then should thy servant be yet a burden unto my lord the king? Thy servant

will go a little way over Jordan with the king: and why should the king recompense it me with such a reward? Let thy servant, I pray thee, turn back again, that I may die in mine own city, and be buried by the grave of my father and of my mother: but, behold, thy servant Chimham, let him go over with my lord the king; and do to him what shall seem good unto thee.”—2 Sam. xix. 34—37.

Barzillai's words to the king of Israel remind us of the influence that age produces upon men.

I. A MELLOWNESS OF HEART. There is a feeling soft and subdued running through the words of this patriarchal Gideonite. Old Time has, I think, this effect generally on the hearts of men. “Men, like peaches and pears,” says Holmes, “grow sweet a little while before they begin to decay. I don't know what it is—whether a spontaneous change, mental or bodily, or whether it is through experience of the thanklessness of critical honesty—but it is a fact that most writers, except sour and unsuccessful ones, get tired of finding fault at about the time they are beginning to grow old. As a general thing, I would not give a great deal for the fair words of a critic if he is himself an author over fifty years of age. At thirty we are all trying to cut our names in big letters upon the wall of this tenement of life; twenty years later we have carved

them, or shut up our jack-knives. Then we are ready to help others, and care less to hinder any, because nobody's elbows are in our way. I just now spoke of the sweetening process authors undergo. Do you know that, in the gradual passage from maturity to helplessness, the harshest characters sometimes have a period in which they are gentle and placid as young children? I have heard it said, but I cannot be sponsor for its truth, that the famous chieftain Lochiel was rocked in a cradle like a baby in his old age. An old man, whose studies had been of the severest scholastic kind, used to love to hear little nursery stories read over and over to him. One who saw the Duke of Wellington in his last years, describes him as very gentle in his aspect and demeanour. I remember a person of singularly stern and lofty bearing who became remarkably gracious and easy in all his ways in the latter period of his life."

Time produces upon men—

II. AN INDISPOSITION TO EXERTION. "How long have I to live, that I should go up with the king unto Jerusalem? I am this day fourscore years old." It seems benevolently arranged that, as the limbs get feeble and incapable of action, the inclination to exertion decreases too. The

patriarch, therefore, gets reconciled to his position. The mind ceases to will what the body is incapable of performing. A craving for rest creeps over the frame as years advance. It is well that it should be so, in order that the soul may calmly ponder upon questions of its imperishable interests, and that death may come with no sudden shock. If age brings on this indisposition to effort, let us work while we can—work whilst the mind is active and the limbs are blithe.

Time produces upon men—

III. A LACK OF INTEREST IN THE WORLD. At one time an invitation to attend in state a king to his capital would have been a strong temptation to "this very great man," but now such an invitation has no attraction; he declines the king's pressing offer. "How long shall I live, that I should go up with the king to Jerusalem?" To an old man the world is a plum that has lost its bloom, an orange that has been sucked till the peel is dry. The pageantries of court and the dazzle of fashionable life are to the old man but as the worthless gilt that spangles the dress of an actor. When old age comes over the millionaire, how shapes the world to him?

Time produces upon men—

IV. AN INCAPACITY FOR EARTHLY ENJOYMENTS. "Can

thy servant taste what I eat or what I drink?" He could not relish either the banquets or the concerts of the court. The choicest delicacies of the table would pall on his appetite, the most transporting strains of music would fall dead upon his ear: "The desire has failed, and the daughters of music are brought low." Years not only steal away our strength, but our relish for earthly pleasures. In this I see divine benevolence, for it means a loosening of the bonds that link us to this mortal state.

Time produces upon men—

V. AN INTEREST IN THE DEAD. "Let thy servant, I pray thee, turn back again that I may die in my own city, and be buried in the grave with my father and my mother." Here is the filial instinct glowing in the breast of an old man. After the romantic wanderings of a long life, time brings the spirit back to the home of childhood, and makes it yearn to sleep the long sleep of death by the side of "father and mother."

CONCLUSION.—Here is a rebuke to worldliness. What if you amass a princely fortune, my avaricious friend? Whilst it will not make you happy, either in the morning of your youth or the zenith of your noon, it will be utterly worthless to you if you live to old age. Here is, too, an argu-

ment for religion. Form an alliance with those eternal principles that will make your spirits young and strong amidst the infirmities of age. Prepare for the future!

"Enough to live in tempest: die in port
Age should fly concourse, cover in retreat
Defects of judgment; and the will subdue;
Walk thoughtful on the silent solemn shore
Of that vast ocean it must sail so soon;
And put good works on board, and wait the wind
That shortly blows us into worlds unknown:
If unconsidered, too, a dreadful scene!—*Young.*

Subject: THE IMPERISHABLE NAME.

"His name shall endure for ever: his name shall be continued as long as the sun."—Psalms lxxii. 17.

We shall apply these words to Christ, although their literal reference points, it may be, to another. What reason have we to believe that Christ's name will endure for ever?

I. He is the AUTHOR OF AN IMMORTAL BOOK. Men's names come down the centuries through their books, although the time comes when the most enduring books become obsolete and pass away. The Bible is Christ's book. He is at once its author and its substance, and this Bible, unlike all other books on this earth,

has imperishable elements. (1) Its doctrines are true to the immortal intellect, (2) its precepts are true to the undying conscience, (3) its provisions are true to the unquenchable aspirations. The Bible, the oldest book extant in the world, is of all books on earth the freshest this day, it is an incorruptible seed, and Christ is in it.

II. He is the **FOUNDER OF ENDURING INSTITUTIONS**. The names of men come down in the institutions they have established—colleges, hospitals, governments, sects. Christ has established institutions here that will last. There is the “Last Supper.” For eighteen hundred years that has lasted, and in all likelihood it will continue “till He comes.” There is the “First Day in the Week”—once in the revolution of every seven days there comes up the day that commemorates His resurrection from the dead.

III. He is the **LIVING HEAD OF AN UNDYING FAMILY**. There is a race of men on this earth who have been regenerated by His Spirit, and who are adopted into His family. These are multiplying every year, and destined one day to populate the whole earth. He is the dominant object of their affection, the chief subject of their thought, the leading theme of their conversation. He lives in them, His name to them is

above every name. They sing—

“Thou dear Redeemer, dying Lamb,
I love to think of Thee;
No music like Thy charming name
Is half so sweet to me.”

CONCLUSION.—Trust in this Imperishable Name—exult in this Imperishable Name. This name will live on earth and extend its influence when the names of your most distinguished statesmen, kings, poets, authors, shall be buried in the dead sea of forgetfulness.

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Subject: [GOD'S WORD A SWORD.]

“The sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.”—Ephesians vi. 17.

Why is this word called the “sword of the Spirit”?

I. The Spirit **FORGED THIS SWORD**. “Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.” He suggested its doctrines, He instigated its facts, He discovered its provisions, He is its author. It is His Sword; no one else could have created such a sword. (1) How *keen*! His “word is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit and of the joints and marrow, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart.” (2) How *lasting*! Time has not blunted its edge nor tarnished its brightness;

it glitters as brilliantly as ever. (3) How *victorious*! What battles it has fought, what triumphs it has won! It has cut its way through false philosophies, corrupt religions, and tyrannic governments.

II. The Spirit **UNSHEATHED THIS SWORD**. This "sword" is thickly sheathed. In old facts, in hoary ceremonies, in obsolete customs, in mystic symbols and antique phraseologies, no one but the Spirit can draw the "sword" out of the scabbard. Even the most enlightened and conscientious expositor will try in vain to do so, unless the Spirit helps him. Churches have mistaken the scabbard for the "sword," and have essayed to use it as a "sword," and they have only made themselves ridiculous in the eyes of the aliens.

III. The Spirit **WIELDS THIS SWORD**. He enlists soldiers and organises armies, He drills them into an aptitude for the campaign, He puts the "sword" into their hand, and directs them in the battle. Thus He wields it; He nerves the arm of the soldier, inspires him with courage, and endows him with skill. Without Him they will neither discover, nor handle the "sword." When they conquer they say, "We have been mighty through Him."

CONCLUSION. — "Gird thy sword upon thy thigh, O most mighty, with thy glory and

majesty. And in thy majesty ride prosperously, because of truth, and meekness, and righteousness."

Subject : DEPRAVITY.

"Having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust."
—2 Peter i. 4.

I. THE SOURCE OF A TREMENDOUS EVIL—*Lust*. 1. The lust of the flesh. The appetites and passions of our animal nature striving for mastery. 2. The lust of the eye. The gate through which the demon of covetousness enters. 3. The pride of life. An undue estimate of our own worth and importance.

II. THE NATURE OF THIS EVIL—*Corruption*. 1. Corruption of the physical nature—health damaged, disease engendered. 2. Corruption of the intellect—judgment biased, mental powers enfeebled. 3. Corruption of the moral nature: heart polluted, "a cage of unclean birds." 4. Corruption of the life—the corruption of the intellect and heart having its full development.

III. THE ESCAPE FROM THE EVIL.—"Having escaped," &c. 1. Escaped from its tyrannical power and authority. 2. Escaped from its baneful effects, both in time and eternity. Thank God, we have a Moses who can lead us out of this Egypt, but—

"Who will be free,
Himself must strike the blow"
J. H.

Seeds of Sermons from the Minor Prophets.

If the Bible as a whole is inspired, it is of vast importance that all its Divine ideas should be brought to bear upon the living world of men. Though the pulpit is the organ Divinely intended for this work, it has been doing it hitherto in a miserably partial and restricted method. It selects isolated passages, and leaves whole chapters and books for the most part untouched. Its conduct to the Minor Prophets may be taken as a case in point. How seldom are they resorted to for texts, and yet they abound with splendid passages throbbing with Divine ideas. It is our purpose to go through this section of the Holy Word; selecting, however, only such verses in each chapter and book as seem the most suggestive of truths, of the most vital interest, and universal application.

We begin with HOSEA. The remembrance of some facts connected with this man will greatly help us in our endeavours to reach the meaning and feel the power of certain of his utterances. He was a native of Israel, and lived in Samaria about 700 or 800 years B.C. His prophecy seems to have embraced a period of about 60 years, from Jeroboam's death to Hezekiah's ascension to the throne. He was contemporary with Isaiah, and preceded Joel, Jonah, and Amos. His prophecies are directed almost exclusively to the ten tribes who had sunk into the deepest idolatry. His style, as a writer, is very peculiar. "It is," says De Witte, "abrupt, unrounded, and ebullient, his rhythm hard leaping and violent." Like a bee he has been said to fly from one flower to another, to suck the honey from all the blossoms.

HOSEA.

No. XI.

Subject: RETRIBUTIVE JUSTICE.

"The wind hath bound her up in her wings, and they shall be ashamed because of their sacrifices."—Hosea iv. 19.

The simple meaning of this is, Israel shall be borne away from her land, suddenly, and violently, as by the winds of heaven. There is retributive justice in the universe. Men are slow to discern it, and it often moves so silently and secretly as to elude the dim vision of the wicked. Still it is in existence, and it works like the thunderstorm; it may sleep silently in the heavens for some time, but break into tempest and fury it must, sooner or later. The verse leads us to notice two

things in relation to this retributive justice:

I. ITS EMBLEM. It is here compared to the "wind." Why is it like "wind"?

First: In its *agitation*. Wind is a disturbance or an agitation of the atmosphere. The average condition of the air is silence and serenity. The normal condition of divine government is quiet. It has no tempest where there is not wickedness. The growing heat of sin so disturbs it that it often breaks into an all-devastating fury. It is like "wind,"

Secondly: In its *violence*. There is often a mighty power in the wind. It sometimes "rends the mountains and breaks in pieces the rocks." It has overturned the "mountains by the roots;" it has "broken

the cedars, even the cedars of Lebanon, and shaken the wilderness." Cambyases being once in the wilderness with the soldiers, a strong and violent wind broke and buried thousands of them in the sand. Who can stand before retributive justice when it comes forth in its power? "The wind hath bound her up in her wings." Avenging justice binds its victim up, and carries it away—whether it be an individual, a nation, or a world—as tempests carry off the chaff. Notice—

II. Its EFFECT. "And they shall be ashamed because of their sacrifices." Shame—moral shame, the primary element in the soul's hell—ever comes to the victim of retributive justice.

First: There is the shame of *disappointment*. All plans broken, all purposes thwarted, all hopes destroyed. "Let me not be ashamed of my hope," said David.

Secondly: There is the shame of *exposure*. The wicked always live in masquerade, they always appear to be what they are not, they are necessary hypocrites. Retributive justice takes off the mask and lays bare their hearts in all their revolting foulness.

Thirdly: There is the shame of *remorse*. This is the most burning shame of all. It sends its fires down into the very centre of man's being, and sets all the moral nerves aflame.

CONCLUSION.—Take warning, ye wicked sons of men; let not the present stillness of your atmosphere deceive you; your sins are generating a heat that must sooner or later so disturb the elements about you, as to bring on you ruin and fill you

with "shame and confusion of face."

"A year has ended—let the good man pause,
And think, for he can think, of
all its crime
And toil and suffering. Nature
has her laws,
That will not brook infringement;
in all time,
All circumstances, all states, in
every clime,
She holds aloft the same aveng-
ing sword;
And sitting on her boundless
throne sublime,
The vials of her wrath, with
justice stored,
Shall, in her own good hour, on
all that's ill be poured."

James Gates Percival.

Subject: NATIONAL DEPRAVITY.

"Hear ye this, O priests; and hearken, ye house of Israel; and give ye ear, O house of the king; for judgment is toward you, because ye have been a snare on Mizpah, and a net spread upon Tabor. And the revolvers are profound to make slaughter, though I have been a rebuker of them all. I know Ephraim, and Israel is not hid from me: for now, O Ephraim, thou committest whoredom, and Israel is defiled."—Hosea v. 1—3.

"With the words 'Hear ye this,' the reproof of the sins of Israel makes a new start, and is specially addressed to the priests and the king's house, i.e., the king and his court, to announce to the leaders of the nation the punishment that will follow their apostasy from God and their idolatry, by which they have plunged the people and kingdom headlong into destruction."—KEIL and DELITZSCH. These words lead us

to consider the depravity of a nation.

I. PRIESTS AND PEOPLE ARE INVOLVED IN IT. "Hear ye this." All orders and degrees of men are here cited to appear before the Almighty on account of the sin of the country. Both priests and rulers, clergy and kings, ought, not only to be unimplicated in the moral corruption of a country, but to be evermore the most zealous and efficient agents in purifying the spirit and elevating the moral character of a nation. In their elevated positions they should not allow a breath of general depravity to touch them, but pour down evermore upon all grades of people sentiments and influences that shall purify and bless. Alas! it has been otherwise: both have, for ages, proved the greatest contaminators and curses to their race. Priests have oftentimes been fiends in sacerdotal robes, and kings beastly voluptuaries in royal garb and stately gait. No man is a real priest of God, and no man a true king, who is not the most distinguished exemplar and promoter of those heavenly virtues which alone can confer peace, stability, and honour upon a country.

II. UNFAITHFULNESS TO GOD IS A PROOF OF IT. "For judgment is toward you, because ye have been a snare on Mizpah, and a net spread upon Tabor." "As hunters spread their net and snares upon the hills Mizpah and Tabor, so ye have snared the people into idolatry, and made them your prey by injustice. As *Mizpah* and *Tabor* mean a *watch-tower* and a *lofty place*, a fit scene for hunters;

playing on the words, the prophet implies, "In the lofty place in which I have set you, whereas ye ought to have been the *watchers* of the people, guarding them from evil, ye have been as hunters entrapping them into it." The meaning is, "These kings and priests use their elevated positions in turning men away from the true God." "And the revolvers are profound to make slaughter, though I have been a rebuker of them all." "Revolters" means apostates, and these apostates were "profound," deeply rooted, sunk into the lowest depths of idolatry. "To make slaughter." Their offerings were not sacrifices, they were mere slaughters, butcheries: there was nothing sacred about them.

Here, then, is a proof of the general depravity of a nation. A nation that is unfaithful to its true God is a tree rotten in its roots, a river poisoned in its springs. Philosophically there can be no morality where there is no fidelity to Him Whose existence is the foundation and Whose will is the rule of all virtue.

III. THE JUDGE OF THE WORLD IS COGNISANT OF IT. "I know Ephraim, and Israel is not hid from me." No covering can conceal it, no argument will disprove it. It lays bare to the eye of Omniscience, "I know Ephraim." Though they were ignorant of Him, He knew them and read them through and through. Nations often cover over their depravity by the promotion of benevolent institutions, by encouraging the ordinances of public worship, and by a public profession

of religion. But there is an Eye that penetrates through the thick covering—He sees the devil in the angel, “He searcheth the heart and trieth the reins of the children of men.”

CONCLUSION.—Suppose not that national depravity is something distinct from the depravity of the individual. It is but the aggregation of individual depravities. Nor suppose that because priests and kings may be the mightiest agents in promoting national immorality and irreligion, that each individual in the nation is less accountable for his sins on that account. No priest or king can compel us to sin. Sin is an act of freedom, and for it each man is held responsible to the Most High. Daniel Webster was once asked, “What is the most important thought you ever entertained?” He replied, after a moment’s reflection, “The most important thought I ever had, was my individual responsibility to God.”

Subject: NECESSARY PRELIMINARIES TO A GODLY LIFE.

“They will not frame their doings to turn unto their God.”—Hosea v. 4.

Preachers do not always deal wisely with their hearers. They call upon men to repent, they often describe repentance with metaphysical accuracy, and enforce it with resistless logic and pressing rhetoric. So with faith, they explain its nature and enforce its duty. They say, “repent or be damned,” “believe or be damned.” They seldom go further. But few have any

notion that there is a certain way to repent and believe, fewer still indicate the nature of that way. Long have I had the impression, which deepens with years, that there is as truly a way to “repent and believe,” as there is a way to cultivate the farm, build the house, or master any art or science.* The text implies this, “They will not frame their doings to turn unto their God.” What is the way? How are men so to frame their doings as to turn unto their God?

I. By THINKING ON CERTAIN SUBJECTS. We ever act from motives when we act as men. But what are motives? The creation of our own thoughts. The man who centres his thoughts on the advantages of wealth, or fame, or knowledge, turns to their pursuit. His thoughts excite his feelings, and his feelings urge him to a resolution. But what are the subjects which thought must dwell on in order that we may move religiously? If I am to repent I must think of my sins in relation to the character of the Holy God and the self-sacrificing Christ. It is only as I muse that the fires of penitence will burn. If I am to believe, I must think upon the object who alone has the attributes to command my highest confidence and unbounded trust. If I am to love supremely, I must meditate on the perfections of Him who is supremely good. In fact, if a man is to turn to any new course of conduct, he must have new motives, and if he is to have new motives, he must have new

* See “Philosophy of Happiness.”

thoughts. "I thought of my ways, I turned my feet unto thy statutes." Thought is the rudder of the soul; as it is turned, the vessel takes the direction.

II. By thinking on certain subjects IN A CERTAIN WAY. There is a way to think. You may think on the most serious subjects in such a way as to produce profanity and mirth. How must you think, then, on these subjects?

First: With *concentration*. The whole thinking force of the soul must be centred on them. The most solemn of them, taken up lightly and despatched with a reflection or two, will not produce the result. If you would bring the beams of the sun into a scorching flame, you must draw them to a focus. And if you would make the great truths of religion kindle repentance within you, you must focalise them by a process of intense thinking.

Secondly: With *persistence*. It is not enough to bend even the whole force of the mind upon them now and then at distant intervals, it must be done consecutively. They must be kept constantly before the mind as objects in its horizon so grand and solemn that all else shall seem trifling and contemptible.

Thirdly: With *devotion*. God must be brought to them. His presence and aid must be invoked.

III. By thinking on certain subjects WITH A PRACTICAL INTENT. To think upon religious subjects in order to increase our theological knowledge, or to make our feelings glow for a

time with a religious sentiment, would be of little service, but to think in order to translate the thought into action, to embody the idea in the life—this is the way. They must be thought upon in order to answer the question, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?"

CONCLUSION.—"This is the way, walk ye in it." Think. Thoughtlessness is the curse of humanity. Think on right subjects—wrong subjects will do you harm. Think on right subjects in a right way. Thinking on right subjects in a wrong way must prove disastrous. Think on right subjects with a practical intent, not for speculation nor sentimentalising, but for action—real, living, godly action. Thus frame your doings, and "turn unto the Lord." Think, brethren, think—there is nothing like noble thoughts. "It is a grand thing when, in the stillness of the soul, thought bursts into flame, and the intuitive vision comes like inspiration; when breathing thoughts clothe themselves in burning words, winged as it were with lightning; or when a great law of the universe reveals itself to the mind of genius, and where all was darkness, His single word bids light be, and all is order where chaos and confusion were. Or when the truths of human nature shape themselves forth in the creative fancies of one life, the million-minded poet, and you recognise the rare power of heart which sympathises with, and can reproduce all that is found in man."—*F. W. Robertson*.

Subject: TOB LATE.

"They shall go with their flocks and with their herds to seek the Lord; but they shall not find *him*; he hath withdrawn himself from them."—Hosea v. 6.

This verse directs us to two subjects of thought.

I. The MOST IMPORTANT OF ALL WORKS. "They shall go with their flocks and their herds to seek the Lord." "Seek the Lord"—this implies a distance between man and his Maker. The Bible abounds with allusions to this distance. What is it? It is not the distance of *being*, for both are in close vital contact. "In *Him* we live and move and have our being." It is the distance of character. Between the sympathies, principles, and aim of the two, there is a distance vast as infinitude. "His thoughts are not our thoughts," &c. Hence the great work of man is to seek the Lord *morally*, to seek His character, and thus become a "partaker of the divine nature."

First: This is a *work in which all men should engage*. The grand duty of all souls is to be "holy even as He is holy." Holiness is the condition of fellowship with Him in "whose presence there is joy, and at whose right hand there are pleasures for evermore."

Secondly: This is a work which all men *must attend to sooner or later*. The time hastens on when the most wicked and worthless man on earth will wake up to the importance of

holiness, and strenuously try for His friendship. Of all works, then, this is the most important. Every other avocation of life is puerile as compared with this. Man's great want is the Lord—the Lord's character, the Lord's fellowship. Without this, whatever else he has, he is lost—lost to happiness, to usefulness, and to the grand ends of his being. Another thought which this subject suggests, is—

II. The most important of all works UNDERTAKEN TOO LATE. "They shall not find *him*; he hath withdrawn himself from them." Though they take with them their flocks and their herds, and are prepared to make the greatest sacrifices, their efforts are fruitless—"He will withdraw himself from them." This is the language of accommodation. He puts forth no effort to conceal Himself, He alters not His position, but He seems to withdraw from them. As the white cliffs of Albion seem to withdraw from the emigrant as his vessel bears him away to distant shores, so God seems to withdraw from the man who seeks Him "too late."

CONCLUSION.—"Then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me; for that they hated knowledge, and did not choose the fear of the Lord: They would none of my counsel: they despised all my reproof. Therefore shall they eat the fruit of their own way, and be filled with their own devices."

The Pulpit and its Handmaids.

ORIGINAL SIMILITUDES.

CHARACTER AND DESTINY.—"Out of our present must grow our future, as out of the seeds of one autumn burst the harvest of another."

LOVE TO GOD.—"Love to God in some forms and measures comes into most men at times; but it only becomes religion when it becomes *supreme*. In all other stages it is destitute of any moral worth."

HOPE.—"Hope is a source of joy. The delights of memory and the pleasures of the passing hour are not to be compared with the joys that spring from anticipation. It is that lamp of the soul that shines on in its greatest gloom."

POLICY AND PRINCIPLE.—"He who follows *expediency* walks, perchance, a flowery path, but it is to hell; he who pursues duty, walks a thorny and an up-hill road, but it leads to celestial dignities and joys."

WORDS.—"Words are not always mere empty sounds that die away upon the air; they are often the mightiest and most enduring forces in the world."

THEOLOGY.—"The most comprehensive system of theology ever brought out by the human intellect, is only, when compared with the Gospel, as one poor acre of land cut off from the mighty continents of the globe."

UNIFORMITY.—"Uniformity in thought is an impossibility—a glorious impossibility. Would I have all seed throw out plants of exactly the same size, and form, and hue; or all stars to move with equal speed, or shine with equal lustre? No! I would have each seed as now, even to the tiniest of them all, to produce a form peculiar to itself, and thus preserve for ever the infinite variety of our landscape. I would have evermore 'one star to differ from another star in glory,' and thus preserve the power of the nightly firmament to inspire me by the boundless variety of its lustrous dome. Far less would I have all minds think alike. Uniformity in human thought would be an anomaly in the universe, and a curse to the race: it would reduce our world to mental stagnation and death."

RELIGIOUS TRUTH.—"Religious truth, if left to remain in the form of ideas in the mind, is only, to the man, like the raindrop upon the leaf; it may glisten like a diamond in the sun, and add a moment's brilliance to the object, but it is of no service to the tree; but when ideas are translated into deeds, they are like the raindrops that penetrate the roots, and bear new energy into every branch and leaf."

HAPPINESS.—"Happiness, like

its highest emblem, light, is ever diffusive. Happy beings ever seek to make others participate in their joy. The happy lark pours its music from the skies to wake its joyous feeling in all the listeners below. The bright spirits of heaven descend and minister to the sorrowing souls of earth, in order to lift them to their own felicities."

ERROR.—"Error frequently brings out the latent glories of truth, as steel brings fire from the flinty rock."

CHRISTIANITY.—"Men have treated Christianity as if it were but a system of logical dogmas. But it is a vital germ. A seed does not require you to give it an organisation; the acorn does not ask you to give it trunk, branches, and form. No! give it soil, and sun, and air, and dew, and it will build out of the elements about it a majestic structure for itself."

HAPPINESS.—"Happiness is the law of the universe. He that is happy ever seeks to make others so. Misery is an accident; happiness is a necessity, for God's being is a necessity. Misery had a beginning; happiness is eternal. Misery is local; happiness is universal. The misery of the universe, as compared with its happiness, is only as one blighted leaf in an immeasurable forest, one discordant note in the orchestra of immensity."

THE UNIVERSE.—"The universe to a holy being is the tongue of God. The rustling leaf, the murmuring brook, the whispering winds, are the speech of Him, as well as the rushing tempest or the roaring thunder.

Every part of nature, and every event of history, are the utterances of a Divine thought; but it is not until the dense atmosphere of sin is removed from the soul, and its din of sinful passions hushed, that we can hear the Divine voice."

IDEAS.—"Great ideas cry for utterance. A deep conviction will always create its evangelist."

DOUBT.—"Honest doubt is better than traditional faith."

TRUSTING.—"We grow Divine in thought as we feel dependence upon the Infinite Intellect. Man gets Divine inspiration only as he loses himself in the Divine will."

IDEAS.—"All the arts that beautify and bless our lives are but ideas that have taken form—plants that have sprung from the germs of thought."

FLUCTUATION.—"Creation is like a flowing river; there is not a particle at rest, and all move simultaneously towards the boundless."

SIN.—"An atom may kill a giant, a word may break the peace of a nation, a spark burn up a city; but it requires earnest and protracted struggles to destroy sin in the soul."

LIFE.—"Life is a battle. Physical life is a battle against danger and disease; intellectual life is a battle against ignorance and error; moral life is a battle against selfishness and wrong. He who has not felt life to be a battle, has not as yet woken up to the reality of existence."

IDEAS.—"Ideas are our rud-
ders. As the soul glides along

the warm and swelling sea of feeling, it can only be turned to new points of the moral compass by their proper use."

DOCTRINES AND PRECEPTS.—

"These are rays from the same eternal sun of truth; the former, however, throwing their radiance upwards, revealing the vast heavens that encircle us, and impressing us with ideas of infinitude; the latter flowing down upon our earthly path, and guiding our feet in the way of life. Of what use would the sun be to us if all its rays streamed upwards, unfolding the boundless blue, and none reached our earthly sphere, to show us how to act? The theology of the Bible is useless to a man unless it changes his heart, and moulds his life anew."

INNATE FORCES.—"The sense of advantage, the sense of right, the sense of God, the sense of an after-life, are the mightiest impulses of the soul; and upon all of these do the doctrines of the Gospel bear. They are the heart-chords, which doctrines can either set to music or wake to thunder."

CREEDS.—"A human creed can no more represent the Gospel than a smoking lamp can represent the great orb that rules the day and kindles up the stars of night."

THE GOSPEL.—"The Gospel is love, Divine love incarnate, reasoning, toiling, praying, and suffering for man. The severe aspects of God in the Bible are only to His love what the shadows are to the sun. Shadows simply that the sun is still shin-

ing on, but some object obstructs its benignant rays. It is human sin that obstructs, at times, the bright rays of love, and flings the shadow of apparent anger on our path; albeit Divine love still shines on behind the obstructive object, and lights up the universe with bliss."

THOUGHTS.—"On the wings of thoughts we rise Godward; and the more lofty our thoughts, the more profound our humility."

THE FRIEND.—"Who is my friend? Not the man who seeks to shake my faith in God by mooted perplexing questions; nor he who seeks to discourage me in my work by parading my difficulties; but the man whose aim it is, by his sympathies and words, and prayers and works, to brace the heart anew—give new fire to the inspiration and nerve to the purpose."

TRUTH.—"Truth, like the river, receives its colour and taste from the channel through which it flows."

THE RELATIVE FITNESS OF PREACHERS.—"A man is only truly a minister to the grade of mind next below him, and between whom and himself, in mental make and experience there is some degree of similitude and sympathy. The lamp that may light with brilliancy your little cottage room may be too weak to break the darkness of the nobleman's spacious hall. The sun that may be able to light one system would be lost in midnight amidst the vastness of another."

Homiletical Brebiaries.

No. XLVIII.

Subject: PHASES OF HUMAN NATURE.

“For though I be absent in the flesh, yet am I with you in the spirit, joying and beholding your order, and the steadfastness of your faith in Christ.”—Colossians ii. 5.

These words bring under our notice three things:—I. A POWER THAT IS COMMON TO MAN AS MAN. “Though I be absent in the flesh, yet am I with you in the spirit.” Here is a power of going forth from the body—visiting distant scenes and feeling an interest in them. This power we are always using. Our minds are always away somewhere; they move with the rapidity of lightning across oceans, continents, and even worlds; they span the ages in a moment. How often do we find ourselves in the distant, and absorbed in its concerns? We thank God for this power. Brutes have it not. It makes us independent of time and space; it gives our life an eternal freshness and an infinite variety. II. A SPIRITUAL CONDITION PECULIAR TO SOME MEN. What is that? (1) *Spiritual order*—“Your order,” which means harmony with ourselves, with the universe, and God. (2) *Stability*—“Steadfastness of your faith in Christ.” To be settled in steadfastness to Christ, settled in hope, confidence! what a blessed state is this! How devoutly to be desired! III. A SOCIAL DELIGHT EXPERIENCED BY CHRISTLY MEN. What is the delight? “Joying and beholding your order,” &c. Though Paul’s body was in Rome, his spirit was at Colosse, rejoicing in the happiness of the Christians there. This is Christly.

No. XLIX.

Subject: MAN IN RELATION TO THE VAST AND THE SPECIFIC.

“Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.”—1 Thessalonians v. 21.

I. Here is a VAST REALM FOR INQUIRY. “Prove all things.” This implies (1) *A freedom of thought*. Go into all churches and

systems, there is good everywhere; find it out. Confine not your mind to your own little creed and church. (2) *A test of truth.* What is the test? It is a threefold test. (a) *Results*—"By their fruits ye shall know them." (b) *The Spirit of Christ*—Whatever agrees not with His free, righteous, and loving Spirit, must be rejected. (c) *Conscience*—"Why even of yourselves judge ye not what is right?" II. Here is a SPECIFIC OBJECT TO ATTAIN. "Hold fast that which is good." It is the good you want. What is the good? The "truth as it is in Jesus," a living, beautiful, soul-transporting reality. Get this, and then hold it fast. There is a danger of losing it; it is worth holding; it is more precious than worlds, it is a pearl of great price—the heaven of souls.

No. L.

Subject: GLORIOUS TEARS.

"Rivers of waters run down mine eyes, because they keep not Thy law."—Psalm cxix. 136.

Tears are revelations of the soul. Sometimes they express weakness, sometimes spleen, sometimes disappointment, sometimes remorse, sometimes the broadest and divinest sympathies. Nothing is so touching as to see a great man weep. The tear of a great soul is electric eloquence. What were the tears of David now? I. They were the tears of a PATRIOT. He knew that those who obeyed not the laws of God were pernicious citizens and would endanger the commonwealth. "Righteousness exalteth a nation," but righteousness is obedience to eternal laws. II. They were the tears of a PHILANTHROPIST. He knew that those who transgressed the Divine laws sinned against their own souls and endangered their own interest. He knew that all the sorrows and miseries sprang from disobedience. III. They were the tears of a RELIGIONIST. He loved the great God, and he was grieved to hear His name profaned, His precepts violated, and His authority contemned. "I beheld," he says in another place, "thy transgressors, and was grieved because they kept not Thy word."

No. LI.

Subject: THE CHRISTIAN RACE.

"So run, that ye may obtain."—1 Corinthians ix. 24.

The Christian life is a race, and we are exhorted to run that the prize may be obtained. "So run." How? I. Run in the **PRESCRIBED COURSE**. The course is marked out and measured. The starting-place is at the foot of the cross, and the goal is planted in the grave. II. Run **WITHOUT INCUMBRANCE**. Lay aside all weight, all worldly cares, and inordinate sympathies and embarrassing prejudices, and fettering habits. III. Run **WITH ALL POSSIBLE CELERITY**. Shake off sloth and languor, stretch every muscle and limb, throw the whole force of your being into the effort. IV. Run **WITH UNTIRING PERSISTENCY**. Pause not, nor loiter a moment until the end is obtained. "So run, that ye may obtain."

No. LII.

Subject: NOBLE YOUNG MEN.

"I have written unto you, young men, because ye are strong, and the word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcome the wicked one."—1 John ii. 14.

The young men of this age are to a great extent objects over which the thoughtful and the true grieve and lament. Here are young men worthy of study and imitation. I. They have **STRENGTH IN THEM**—"Because ye are strong." Bodily strength is a good thing, and young men should cultivate it. Mental strength is a better strength still, and should be striven for with earnestness. But moral strength is the best of all. Strength of holy affections and Divine resolves, strength to bear trial with fortitude, brave dangers with heroism, resist the devil successfully, and discharge obligations acceptably to God. II. They have **GOD'S WORD WITHIN THEM**—"The Word of God abideth in you." It is there as a permanent, animating, and controlling power. The word of God is not merely in their libraries or in their memories, but in their souls—a central force. III. They have the **DEVIL UNDER THEM**—"Ye have overcome the wicked one." They have conquered their lusts, obtained a mastery over their passions, and thus planted their foot upon the head of the old serpent.

No. LIII.

Subject: ONE FATHER.

"Have we not all one Father?"—Malachi ii. 10.

Yes, all have one Father, one common Father; all are His offspring. If so, I. ALL MEN ARE BRETHREN—"Men to men should brothers be." II. THEN ALL LAW IS LOVE IN ESSENCE. The law that is to rule is not to be regarded as the enactment of a monarch, but as the loving direction of a tender Father. III. Then ALL OBEDIENCE IS FILIAL DEVOTION—a devotion of reverence, gratitude, and adoration.

Literary Notices.

[We hold it to be the duty of an Editor either to give an early notice of the books sent to him for remark, or to return them at once to the Publisher. It is unjust to praise worthless books; it is robbery to retain unnoticed ones.]

 THE REVIEWER'S CANON.

In every work regard the author's end,
 Since none can compass more than they intend.

THE WORKS OF AURELIUS AUGUSTINE, BISHOP OF HIPPO. Edited by MARCUS DODS, M.A. Vol. V. Writings in connection with the Manichæan Heresy. Vol. VI. Letters of St. Augustine. Edinburgh: T. and T. Clarke, 38, George Street.

"THE Manichæan heresy," with which the celebrated Augustine deals in Vol. V., takes its name from its author, who seems to have been born in the year A.D. 240. The meaning of his name—*Manis*—has been the subject of endless conjecture. He belonged to a Magean family, and, while a youth, won a distinguished place among the sages of Persia. It was said that he was a master of all the law peculiar to his class, and was so proficient a mathematician and geographer, that he was able to construct a globe. His disposition it was said was ardent and lively, and his appearance very striking. He wore the usual dress of a Persian sage—the high-soled shoes, the one red the other green, the mantle of blue, and the ebony staff in his hand, and the Babylonish book under his left arm gave him an aspect arresting if not admirable. He was the author of several works and

the founder of a religious sect, which was reckoned amongst the heretical bodies of the Church. It referred the universe to two principles, styled Light, the Good, and Darkness, the Bad. In some form or other the errors of this sect reappear in every age, and come as matters of speculation, at times, into the minds of most thinkers. Such a work, therefore, as this, from the pen of Augustine, will have interest to most thoughtful men. Indeed, whatever subject a man of lofty genius and suggestive mind writes upon, however obsolete or absurd, is sure to be invested with some interest. The other volume before us from the pen of Augustine is a work of letters to a great number of his distinguished contemporaries, on a vast variety of subjects. A man reveals himself in his letters—his whole character, his feelings as well as his judgment; his motives, and the various ramifications of interest. "In his familiar correspondence," says the able editor of this volume, "we see the man as he is known to his intimate friends, in his times of relaxation and unstudied utterance." These letters, therefore, will be appreciated by those who desire to make a close acquaintance with one of the greatest men that have appeared in the post-apostolic ages.

MANUAL OF MYTHOLOGY. By ALEXANDER S. MURRAY. London : Asler and Co., 13, Bedford Street, Covent Garden.

THE following extract from the preface will indicate the character and design of this book :—"With the view of making the subject of ancient mythology accessible to the higher classes of schools, to art students, and to general readers, the plan, and to a great extent the substance of the present book, have been taken from the German work of Petiscus, entitled 'Der Olymp,' which has proved how well it is adapted for such a purpose by the fact of its having already reached a seventeenth edition. At the same time, while endeavouring to imitate the simple style of narrative to which the success of that work has mainly been due, it has been found necessary to reject many of the observations made by its author, and to adopt in their place the results of more recent research. This is particularly the case in regard to the Introduction, in which it is attempted to show how the belief in the existence of the gods originated, and to point out the influence of such belief with special reference to the Ancient Greeks. A new introduction has also been written to the legends of the Greek heroes, while the legends themselves, excepting those of Herakles and the heroes of the wars against Thebes and Troy, have been considerably expanded. In addition to the mythologies of Greece and Rome, the present work will be found to contain an account of the *Scandinavian* and *Old German*, the *Indian* and *Egyptian* mythologies." This is an admirable work; the writing is clear, scholarly, and free from wordiness. The thirty-five plates on toned paper, representing seventy-six mythological subjects, are exquisite pro-

ductions of art. We know of no work on the subject approaching it in its intrinsic merits, as well as its fitness for schools, art students, and general readers.

THE MISSIONARY WORLD, with Recommendatory Preface by Rev. W. B. BOYCE, Rev. J. MULLENS, D.D., and Rev. E. B. UNDERHILL, LL.D. ; also, THE NEW CYCLOPEDIA OF ILLUSTRATIVE ANECDOTE, with Introduction by DONALD MACLEOD, D.D. London : Elliot Stock, 62, Paternoster Row.

The first of these volumes, it is said, is in the interest of Christian missions generally, without regard to sect or party. It gives, in a clear and concise manner, a comprehensive view of the state of the world without the Gospel ; the early history of missions and missionary societies in all ages and countries, and of all denominations ; encouraging facts and statements relating to the success of the enterprise ; valuable suggestions as to the best means of supporting the work ; affecting views of Divine Providence in opening up the way, and in defending His servants in times of danger ; a review of the current missionary literature of the day, describing the principal works on which missions have been published ; sketches of eminent missionaries of all denominations ; a brief survey of the principal fields of missionary labour, with notices of what has been done and of what still remains to be accomplished, and gleanings of recent missionary information, with motives for perseverance in the good work. Whilst some of the anecdotes here are, we suspect, mythical, and others we regard as intolerably stupid, there are, we have no doubt, many well authenticated, and strikingly illustrative of the power and the working of the Gospel in foreign lands. There seems such a demand for books of religious anecdotes just now, that if facts cannot be got they must be created to supply the craving. The second is another volume of religious anecdotes. What we said of the former work may be applied to this. They go forth with the assumption that the religious public are excessively credulous, else why not quote in all cases authorities ? If the pulpit is going to use all the books of religious anecdotes that are streaming from the press, it will be in danger of becoming the organ of sensational gossip. At the same time we admit that facts in human life are amongst the best instruments both to illustrate and drive home to the heart great spiritual truths.

EXPERIMENTAL GUIDES. By ROBERT PHILIP, D.D. Edinburgh : William R. Nimmo.

HERE are eight small but well printed and handsomely "got up" volumes, all under the general title of "Experimental Guides." An extract from the publisher's preface will explain their origin and design :—"About the

year 1830, the Rev. Robert Philip, of Maberly Chapel, London, commenced the publication of a series of small volumes, intended as 'guides' to various classes of Evangelical Christians. The wide circulation they met with was a sufficient proof of the estimation in which they were held. Having been for some years out of print, and many inquiries being made for them, it has been determined by the present publishers to reissue them in a new and revised edition, from a belief that they will still prove instrumental in promoting the growth of spiritual life amongst the Christian community at large. Their original circulation was not confined to this country, but they were reproduced on a far more extensive scale in America, where they were collected into two volumes under the title of 'Devotional Guides,' and brought out under the editorship of the Rev. Albert Barnes, of Philadelphia, the eminent commentator, whose praise is in all the churches." It was our happiness to enjoy the friendship of the author of these essays, and often were we impressed with the originality of his thoughts. We remember well the interest that these essays awakened when they first made their appearance. The subject of these essays, each of which makes a small volume, are—"Redemption," "Eternity Realised," "Sacramental Experience," "The Comforter," "Christian Experience," "Communion of God," "The God of Glory," "Pleasing God." Heartily do we concur with the late lamented Dr. Albert Barnes, who says in relation to them: "I regard the series of 'Guides' here published as adapted in an eminent manner to accomplish this purpose. I should regard their extensive circulation as fitted to promote the spirituality of Christians, to make them acquainted with their own hearts, and with the power of the religion which they profess to love; and as an indication of a disposition among Christians to examine deeply the foundations of their piety, and to cultivate communion with God."

THE BIBLICAL MUSEUM. By JAMES COMPER GRAY. Vol. III., containing the Acts and Romans; Vol. IV., the Epistles of Corinthians to Philemon. London: Elliot Stock, 62, Paternoster Row.

THE two previous volumes of the "*Biblical Museum*," we noticed some months ago. We indicated then the character of the work, and gave it our hearty recommendation. The volumes before us are on the same plan and wrought out with the same ability. Though the author has made a tolerably free use of the *HOMILIST* and some of our other productions, he has, unlike authors in the same line, not failed to acknowledge his obligations. We congratulate him on the progress he has made in the collection in his "*Museum*," and hope that he will live not only to complete it, but to engage in other literary labours of equal interest and value. We trust

that he and his enterprising publisher will experience a mutual gratification in the financial as well as the spiritual results of *these invaluable volumes*.

THE CHATTERBOX for 1872, and the CHILDREN'S PRIZE, 1872. Edited by J. ERSKINE CLARKE, M.A. London : W. W. Gardner, 2, Paternoster Buildings.

It is not our fault that these Christmas volumes have not been noticed before. They have only just reached us, and we hasten to congratulate our old friend—the able and indefatigable editor—on another annual production of a work for children which has neither a rival nor equal. They are just such books as will ravish a child's heart as well as indoctrinate his mind with Christly sentiments.

KINGDOM OF GOD UNDER THE OLD TESTAMENT. By E. W. HENGSTENBERG, Vol. II. Also COMMENTARY ON THE OLD TESTAMENT. By C. F. KIEI, D.D., and F. DELITZSCH, D.D. Translated from the German by ANDREW HARPER, B.D. London : T. and T. Clarke, Paternoster Row.

WE are glad to receive the second volume of "*The Kingdom of God*," by Hengstenberg. Our readers require no information concerning the history of the author or the character of his works. Most Biblical students have some of his productions in their libraries, and value them on account of their great scholarship, noble thoughts, and reverent spirit. This volume contains an able, touching, and somewhat elaborate sketch of his noble life and varied writings. "For nearly fifty years this noble-minded scholar and Christian instructed his generation, exerting an influence not surpassed by that of any other man upon his own country, and through the translation of his works and the echoes of his influence, influencing the Christians of other lands. He is gone, and his works do follow him. His works also remain, and it is long before they will cease to be standards of authority. In time, however, they will cease to be such, but his name will for ever take high rank among those who have devoted their lives to the *testimony of Jesus*, to its vindication and enforcement, both in the Old Testament and in the New."

The other volume is a commentary by Dr. Keil "On the two books of the Chronicles." It is a part of the Biblical Commentary on the Old Testament, in which he and Dr. Delitzsch are engaged. When the work is completed it will form the most scholarly exposition of the old Scriptures extant.



On the Promotion of Ecclesiastical Unity.

“ I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering, forbearing one another in love ; endeavouring [*σπουδαίοντες*, hastening with eagerness and diligence] to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. . . . One body, one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling ; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.”—Ephesians iv. 1—4.

THE chapter before us opens with an exhortation to unity—that is, to unity both internal and external.

“ I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord,” writes the holy apostle St. Paul, “ beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering, forbearing one another in love ; endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace : ONE body, ONE Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling ; ONE Lord, ONE faith, ONE baptism, ONE God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.”

Here, then, we learn :—

I. THE NATURE OF CHRISTIAN UNITY.

II. THE NATURE OF THE DUTY LAID UPON US OF PROMOTING SUCH UNITY.

Observe, then :—

I. *The Nature of Christian Unity.*

“Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond [*ἐν τῇ συνδέσει*] of peace”—that is, “one body, one Spirit one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all.” Here we have a most admirable summary of the essential elements of Christian unity. Here St. Paul sets forth plainly and explicitly what is to be understood by unity. And we have therefore only to see that, wherein such unity consists, in order to know accurately what it is that we are required to promote. Now, according to St. Paul, Christian unity is first *internal*, and secondly *external*; and—

(1.) Of internal Christian unity. “Endeavouring,” writes the apostle, “to keep the unity of the Spirit [*i.e.*, spiritual unity] in the bond of peace.” And again: he requires not only “one body,” but also “one Spirit” [*ἐν πνεύμα*].

But what is here meant by spiritual unity? It is not meant that all the members of the Church of Christ should *think* exactly alike upon every point. For that is a simple impossibility. And even were it possible, it is not desirable. There may, therefore, consistently with the preservation of unity, be differences of *opinion* within the Church.

It is not meant that all the members of the Church must *feel* exactly alike upon every point. For that is also a simple impossibility, and were it possible it is not desirable. There may, therefore, consistently with the preservation of unity, be differences of *taste* within the Church. It is not meant that all the members of the Church *should be true members of Christ*. For that is in the present state of the world impossible, since until the

end of the world there will of necessity be in the Church both good and bad. And were it possible, it does not of necessity follow that there would be unity, since true Christians, alas! have already done so much to rend and divide the Church. No: by internal unity is meant such an exercise of humility [ταπεινοφροσύνη], meekness [πραότης], long-suffering [μακροθυμία], and forbearance of one another in love, as will, despite differences of opinion and taste, enable the members of Christ's Holy Catholic Church to dwell together in brotherly affection, and to submit themselves with a ready mind to the order universally established in that Church. The internal unity of the Church can only be attained by the sacrifice, the willing sacrifice, upon the part of individuals, and for the good of the whole, of their individual opinions and tastes. If this principle were carried into practice, a Presbyterian might and would remain in the fold of the Old Catholic Church, which is universally episcopal, and a Puritan might worship in brotherly love side by side with the most ardent ritualist. Internal unity consists in the submission of private opinion and private taste for the sake of our brethren in the faith and of the Church at large. There would in such case be differences of opinion, of conviction, and of taste, but still there would be peace, unity, and concord. But—

(2.) Of external unity. "One body [ἐν σῶμα] one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all." Now, here we have the elements of *external* unity. This is manifest by the expression "one body;" for by "one body" is here meant *one Church*, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic! What St. Paul requires of Christians is that they strive to maintain internal and external unity, or rather external and internal unity. He wishes to see but "one body and one Spirit"—ἐν σῶμα καὶ ἐν πνεῦμα. And here

by the "body" is meant the visible Church—the Church in its outward form; so that when he desires that Christians shall be but "ONE BODY," he desires in plain terms that, by the avoidance of divisions and schisms, there may be but *one Church everywhere and for all the world!* He is desirating outward or visible unity. The body is in its nature outward and visible; the Spirit is, upon the other hand, inward and invisible. And hence St. Paul urges the Galatians, and through them, all the faithful, diligently to preserve the external and visible unity of the Church, *along with and as necessary to its internal and spiritual unity.* "One body and one Spirit" is the motto he sets before the faithful, visible as well as invisible unity, and the former as necessary to the latter!

But wherein does this external or exterior unity of the Church consist?

It consists:—

(1.) In the common acknowledgment and common worship of Christ as the Supreme Lord, Pontiff, and Head of the Church.

"One Lord!" Where Christ is not acknowledged and worshipped as Head and Lord there is lacking one essential mark of visible unity.

It consists:—

(2.) In the right profession of the faith.

"One Lord, one faith!" There must be the right profession of the Catholic faith. This is an essential mark of external unity. And as that faith is ONE, not many, so no Church is in visible or external communion with the Catholic Church of Christ, save as it professes and maintains that ONE FAITH, and none other. What that one faith is, it is in the province and prerogative of the holy œcumenical Church of Christ to determine. The Church

of undivided Christendom is the one and only infallible interpreter of the Word of God. And hence that Church is called by St. Paul "the PILLAR and BASIS of truth." That, therefore, is not the Catholic Faith, which the Church has not declared to be such, but which is merely the result of "private interpretation." For there are nearly as many faiths as there are such private interpretations. The Unitarian and the Mormon profess to have got their respective faiths from the Bible, and so in like manner of a perfect swarm of heresies. Where amid such confusion is there a sure and infallible guide into the truth? Nowhere, save in the authoritative teaching of the Church prior to the division of Christendom into east and west. And if we have not a sure guide in the one, holy, œcumenical Church—"against which the gates of hell shall not prevail"—then there exists no such guide at all! Reason is certainly no such guide. For the moment that reason is made to sit in judgment upon the Revelation of God, we have taken up the standpoint of, and are on the broad road to, rationalism, pantheism, and atheism. The very idea of an authoritative revelation vanishes except upon the supposition that there exists an authority superior to reason and private judgment competent infallibly to interpret that revelation. Otherwise each man's faith is what he lists—what his reason or his private judgment may happen to approve.

Every Church must, therefore, in order to be in visible unity with the Holy Catholic Church of Christ, confess and profess the Catholic Faith. Where there is a diversity of faiths, there there has been a breach of external unity, or open schism.

But visible or external unity consists:—

(3.) In the reverent and right use of the orders, sacraments, and forms of the Church.

"One Lord, one faith, one baptism." The very reference to the sacrament of holy baptism shows that St. Paul was speaking of *external* unity; and in the early centuries of the Christian Church this mark of external unity was preserved. The different branches of the Church acknowledged but one common order throughout the whole world—professed but one faith—observing the same holy sacraments and rites, and using like liturgies. Instead of a legion of sects, there was but one vast organisation! East and west made but one undivided Church, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic, having the same orders, the same sacraments, the same discipline, the same faith! There was then but "one Lord, one faith, one baptism." Then there existed external unity; and in that holy unity there was almighty strength—strength to grapple with and overcome the fiercest forms of barbarism and despotism. But now, alas! how sad and heartrending a spectacle does Christendom present to us and to the heathen world! How feeble does the Church appear! What incompetency does she appear to exhibit for the task laid upon her of christianising mankind! How, alas! is she become the scoff of the heathen, who behold the babel of warring sects, whose strife appears to be that they may bring into utter discredit and contempt the name of Christ.

And why is all this? Why is the Church so weak—so prostrate? Because the blessed unity of Christ's holy Church has been profanely riven and torn, and splintered and shattered by unholy hands, and that, as if to parody all religion, in the name of *conscience*.

Two things are in brief apparent, namely, that there can be no internal Christian unity where there is not even external Christian unity; and secondly, that the latter conditions the former. For with the ex-

ternal unity of the Church, its internal unity is sure to follow.

It is, therefore, an essential mark of external unity that there be in the Church the same order, the same sacraments, the same faith, and the same cultus.

The unity of the Church should not be some subtle thing, which only metaphysicians and skilled theologians can discern, or think they discern; but should be EXTERNAL, MANIFEST TO ALL THE WORLD! Thus it has been, God grant that it may be thus again!

But external unity consists:—

(4.) In a manifest family relationship between all true branches of the One Church.

“One God and Father of all.” It ought to be evident that all Christians are of one family—children of one common Father and disciples of one common Lord.

But this can never be except as all churches and sects agree to return to the *status quo* of the Church prior to the division of Christendom; until, in brief, all Christians, leaving their whims and oddities and private convictions behind, are content to return to the ancient standpoint and become Old Catholics. And when all Christians have learnt with all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering and with forbearance one of another in love, to endeavour to keep both the external and internal unity of the Church—this transcendent result, this blessed and glorious unity of the whole company of the faithful—for the which our divine Lord Jesus offered up prayer and supplication to the Father, will attain its brilliant consummation. “Neither pray I for these alone (St. John xvii. 20, 21), but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; that they ALL may be ONE; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they all may be one in us: that [adds our Blessed High Priest, as if to show that this

unity was to be so external and visible as to become appreciable even to the worldly mind] the world may believe that thou hast sent me. . . . I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made PERFECT IN ONE; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me."

If we wish therefore the success of Christianity, we must first of all pocket our grievances and our nostrums . . . restore the broken unity of the Church, and become "PERFECTED IN ONE"—τετελειωμένοι εἰς ἓν.

So much, then, as to the nature of Christian unity. It must, in order to be true unity, be both external and internal, since where there is not external unity there cannot be internal unity—"ONE BODY AND ONE SPIRIT."

But observe :—

II. *The Nature of the Duty laid upon the Faithful of promoting such Unity.*

"I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, endeavouring—with all lowliness and meekness and long-suffering and mutual forbearance in love—to keep the unity of the Spirit (internal unity) in the bond of peace (in external unity):—one body [one church externally] and one Spirit [one church internally]."

Now here is the duty laid upon all Christians. And, analysing St. Paul's expressions, we learn :—

(1.) That it is of the essence of the Christian vocation to keep guard over the Church's unity.

"I therefore . . . beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called; . . . endeavouring," etc., etc., "to keep the unity," etc. If language mean anything, it is here meant that a Christian does not walk worthy of his vocation as a Christian, unless he endeavour to keep—that is, to preserve and promote—the

external and internal unity of the Church. The promotion and preservation of unity is, we repeat, of the very essence of the Christian vocation. We may think we see much in the Church which admits of reform; but we commit ourselves to a perilous course, a sinful course, if we permit our objections against the order of the Church to induce us by leaving the Church to commit a breach of unity. We may think we are acting up to the dictates of conscience in so doing; but in reality we are committing, in the name of conscience, a grievous sin against the body of Christ, since we are violating both the visible and the invisible unity of the Church for the sake of setting up our own private opinions. By schism we cannot promote unity, and hence, however harmless such continued separation from the old Church may seem, it is nevertheless sinful. And those who actively or passively perpetuate divisions already created, assist in the formation of new divisions, are walking unworthily of their vocation.

We learn :—

(2.) That the promotion of unity involves a sacrifice for the good of the Church of many individual convictions.

“With all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering, forbearing one another in love.” Here are the terms upon which alone ecclesiastical unity can be preserved. First comes *humility*. “With all lowliness—*μετὰ πᾶσης ταπεινοφροσύνης*—with all humble-mindedness.” Those who are humble-minded are apt to estimate their own opinions, inferences, conclusions, etc., etc., at too low a value to allow of their thinking for a moment of setting them up in defiance of the Church. He is not a very humble man who thinks himself wiser than the whole of undivided Christendom. Humility is a prime safeguard against schism. Secondly comes *meekness*. “With all lowliness and meekness.” Here is another Christ-like quality. By meekness

is here meant mildness and gentleness of disposition—a disposition such as would induce us to receive injuries without retaliation or resentment. Had this quality of character always been exhibited by the faithful, there would never have been the divisions and schisms which, alas! deface and disgrace the annals of the Church. And were there more *meekness* among Christians and Christian sects conjoined with humility, the restoration of unity would not be the almost hopeless task it now is. Thirdly comes *long-suffering* (*μακροθυμία*). “With all lowliness and meekness and long-suffering.” Here is another god-like quality of character. There may be long-suffering where there is not meekness. A man of fiery zeal, of burning enthusiasm, a man of warrior type, may nevertheless be long-suffering, and his long-suffering will serve for a sort of meekness. But where there is lowliness, and with lowliness meekness, and with meekness long-suffering, what a threefold bond of peace do they not form? But fourthly comes *forbearance*. “Forbearing one another.” If men of different schools of thought would only forbear one another, how utterly metamorphosed would be the aspect of the Christian world. The *raison d’être* of many a split and faction would thereby be cut away at its very roots. Hence the importance to Christian unity of forbearance. But fifthly comes *love*. “Forbearing one another *in love* :” love—love for souls—love for Christ—love for the Church! Our very forbearance is to be steeped in love! It is not to be sullen, morose, cynical, querulous. “Forbearing one another in love.” Surely the exercise of these divine qualities of character implies the surrender of many a pet conviction—many a favourite opinion—many a susceptibility—many a scruple! And yet it is no more than Christ expects of us! For the sake of the unity of the Church, He requires of us, if need be, the sacrifice of our

very selves ; and much more the sacrifice of opinions and susceptibilities, which probably are more honoured in the breach than in the observance.

But we learn :—

(3.) That the promotion of unity involves effort and watchfulness.

“Endeavouring [*σπουδάζοντες τηρεῖν*] to keep the unity of the Spirit,” etc.

Here there is required, first of all, effort. “*Endeavouring* [*σπουδάζοντες* literally, hastening with eagerness and diligence] to keep,” etc. It must not be supposed that unity can be preserved without active, eager, and diligent endeavour. Nay, more. We are taught by St. Paul to bend all our lowliness, all our meekness, all our long-suffering, all our forbearance one of another, all our love, to this one end—namely, UNITY! These qualities are to be consciously subverted to this one blessed issue! We are to hasten with eagerness and diligence to consecrate these splendid qualities of character to the preservation, promotion, and restoration, where it has been destroyed, of the external and internal unity of the Catholic Church.

But there is required also, secondly, vigilance. “Endeavouring to keep (*τηρεῖν*—literally, to keep watch over) the unity of the Spirit,” etc. Now this term—“keep” [*τηρεῖν*—implies, first, that there is an enemy against whom it is needful to guard, whose prime object it will be to break up the unity of the Church, or to keep it broken up, supposing it to be so already. And it implies, secondly, that there is in fallen man a too strong predisposition towards schisms and divisions. Hence a subjective and objective reason for vigilance. We have need to be on our guard at all times, and to have our weapons always ready for action. Such is the nature of the duty incumbent upon all Christians of promoting the external

and internal unity of the Church of Christ. We cannot, alas ! speak of the preservation of the unity of the Church, since it is already broken. But we can labour and pray for its restoration ! We can, each in his station, work for unity—the visible unity of the whole of Christendom. The result—splendid and awe-inspiring—may be yet remote. But, remote or not remote, our duty is plainly set before us. And that duty is to seek the external, and through it the internal, unity of the Church, that there may be “ONE BODY AND ONE SPIRIT,” even as we are called in one hope of our calling : ONE LORD, ONE FAITH, ONE BAPTISM.

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UNITY IN THE BOND OF PEACE.—“Bind not thine hands, but bind thy heart and mind. Bind thyself to thy brother. They bear all things lightly who are bound together by love. Bind thyself to him and him to thee. For to this end was the Spirit given, that He might unite those who are separated by race and diversity of habits : old and young, rich and poor, child, youth, and man, male and female, and every soul become in a manner one, and more entirely so than if they were of one body. For this spiritual relation is far higher than natural relation, and the perfectness of union more entire ; because the conjunction of the soul, being simple and accordant, is more perfect. And how is this unity preserved ? ‘In the bond of peace.’ It is not possible that unity should exist in enmity and discord. St. Paul would have us linked and tied one to another : not simply that we be at peace, not simply that we love one another, but that in all there should be but one soul. A glorious bond is this : with this bond let us bind ourselves together alike to one another and to God.”—*St. Chrysostom.*

UNITY IS BROTHERLY LOVE.—“The Holy Spirit came in the form of a dove. . . . Brotherly love must make doves its patterns ; in gentleness and kindness let the strife be with the lamb and the sheep. What home hath the wolf’s fierceness in a Christian breast ? or the savageness of the dog, or the deadly poison of the serpent, or the ferocity of wild beasts ! They cannot inherit the reward of peace who trample upon the peace of God. . . . He who holds not unity holds not the law of God, holds not the faith of Father and Son, holds not the truth unto salvation.”—*St. Cyprian.*

Homiletic Sketches on the Book of Psalms.

Our Purpose.—Many learned and devout men have gone *philologically* through this *TEHELIM*, this book of Hebrew hymns, and have left us the rich results of their inquiries in volumes within the reach of every Biblical student. To do the mere verbal *hermeneutics* of this book, even as well as it has been done, would be to contribute nothing fresh in the way of evoking or enforcing its Divine ideas. A thorough *HOMILETIC* treatment it has never yet received, and to this work we here commit ourselves, determining to employ the best results of modern Biblical scholarship.

Our Method.—Our plan of treatment will comprise four sections :—(1.) The *HISTORY* of the passage. Lyric poetry, which the book is, is a delineation of living character ; and the key, therefore, to unlock the meaning and reach the spirit of the words is a knowledge of the men and circumstances that the poet sketches with his lyric pencil.—(2.) *ANNOTATIONS* of the passage. This will include short explanatory notes on any ambiguous word, phrase, or allusion that may occur.—(3.) The *ARGUMENT* of the passage. A knowledge of the main drift of an author is amongst the most essential conditions for interpreting his meaning.—(4.) The *HOMILETICS* of the passage. This is our main work. We shall endeavour so to group the Divine ideas that have been legitimately deduced, as to suggest such thoughts, and indicate such sermonising methods, as may promote the proficiency of modern pulpit ministrations.

Subject.—The Prayer of Revenge. (3.) Egotistically Pious.

False witnesses did rise up ;
 They laid to my charge things that I knew not.
 They rewarded me evil for good
 To the spoiling of my soul.
 But as for me,
 When they were sick, my clothing was sackcloth :
 I humbled my soul with fasting ;
 And my prayer returned into mine own bosom.
 I behaved myself as though he had been my friend or brother :
 I bowed down heavily, as one that mourneth for his mother.
 But in mine adversity they rejoiced, and gathered themselves together :
 Yea, the abjects gathered themselves together against me, and I knew it
 not ;
 They did tear me, and ceased not :
 With hypocritical mockers in feasts,
 They gnashed upon me with their teeth.

Lord, how long wilt thou look on ?
 Rescue my soul from their destructions,
 My darling from the lions.
 I will give thee thanks in the great congregation :
 I will praise thee among much people.
 Let not them that are mine enemies wrongfully rejoice over me :
 Neither let them wink with the eye that hate me without a cause.
 For they speak not peace :
 But they devise deceitful matters against them that are quiet in the
 land.
 Yea, they opened their mouth wide against me,
 And said, Aha ! aha ! our eye hath seen it.
 This thou hast seen, O Lord :
 Keep not silence ; O Lord, be not far from me.
 Stir up thyself, and awake to my judgment,
 Even unto my cause, my God and my Lord.
 Judge me, O Lord my God, according to thy righteousness ;
 And let them not rejoice over me.
 Let them not say in their hearts, Ah ! so would we have it :
 Let them not say, We have swallowed him up.
 Let them be ashamed and brought to confusion together
 That rejoice at mine hurt :
 Let them be clothed with shame and dishonour
 That magnify themselves against me.
 Let them shout for joy, and be glad,
 That favour my righteous cause :
 Yea, let them say continually, Let the Lord be magnified,
 Which hath pleasure in the prosperity of his servant.
 And my tongue shall speak of thy righteousness
 And of thy praise all the day long."—Psalm xxxv. 11—28.

HISTORY. See page 7.

ANNOTATIONS. Ver. 11.—"*False witnesses did rise up.*" Marg. : "Witnesses of wrong." "Unjust witnesses."—*Delitzsch*. "*They laid to my charge things that I knew not.*" "That which I have not known they asked me."—*Alexander*. The idea is—they strive to make me confess to crimes of which I have no knowledge.

Ver. 12.—"*They rewarded me evil for good to the spoiling of my soul.*" "Spoiling of my soul" is rendered by *Delitzsch*, *Hengstenberg*, and *Alexander* "bereavement of my soul." The idea is that the conduct of his enemies involved him in great deprivation of friends and other blessings.

Ver. 13.—"But as for me, when they were sick, my clothing was sackcloth." The idea is that he showed them the greatest compassion in their distress, so much so that he put on "sackcloth," the Oriental mode of expressing grief. "*I humbled my soul with fasting.*" Marg. : "I afflicted my soul." It means,—I mortified myself with fasting. "*And my prayer returned into mine own bosom.*" This is a somewhat obscure expression : it may mean that he prayed with his head bowed upon his bosom, or that he desired that the prayer he offered for them should return to the benefit of himself—*i. e.*, as if he said,—My prayer shall not be lost, it shall return to the blessing of him that proffered it.

Ver. 14.—"I behaved myself as though he had been my friend or brother." Marg. : "I walked"—that is, I conducted myself towards mine enemies as though they had been my dearest friends. "*I bowed down heavily, as one that mourneth for his mother.*" The sorrow for a mother is, as a rule, of all sorrows, the deepest ; it is especially so in the East, where polygamy is practised. "As one that mourneth for his mother I went softly about in mourning attire."—*Delitzsch.*

Ver. 15.—"But in mine adversity they rejoiced, and gathered themselves together." Marg. : "Halting, they rejoiced." "*Yea, the objects gathered themselves together against me, and I knew it not.*" Who are here meant by the "objects" is doubtful ; the word may mean degraded outcasts, or the slanderers,—those who smote him with their tongue ; or, as some suppose, cripples—those who were lame. Dr. Alexander's translation will perhaps express the idea of the verse : "And yet in my limping they rejoiced and were gathered together : there were gathered together against me cripples, and I did not know (it) : they did tear and were not silent."

Ver. 16.—"With hypocritical mockers in feasts, they gnashed upon me with their teeth." "After the manner of common parasites they gnashed upon me with their teeth."—*Delitzsch.* In all ages there have been those who for bread or lucre will sell themselves to the vilest work ; the reference is here probably to that class.

Ver. 17.—"Lord, how long wilt thou look on !" "Lord" here is not Jehovah, but Adhonai, which properly expresses empire. The words imply (1) a belief that the Lord knew what was going on ; (2) that He would sooner or later interpose ; (3) that the delay of His interposition was painful. "*Rescue my soul from their destructions, my darling from the lions.*" "My darling." Marg. : "My only one." That is, rescue my lonely soul from my savage and furious enemies.

Ver. 19.—"Let not them that are mine enemies wrongfully (Marg. : *Falsely*) rejoice over me : neither let them wink with the eye that hate me without a

cause." "Let not those that hate me without a cause wink the eye." —*Delitzsch*. "Winking is here referred to as a gesture of mental congratulation amongst accomplices of guilt."

Ver. 20.—"For they speak not peace: but they devise deceitful matters against them that are quiet in the land." The writer speaks of his enemies as quarrelsome people, who used falsehood to stir up strife, and were constantly at this miserable work with those in the land who, like himself, desired to be "quiet" and at peace.

Ver. 21.—"Yea, they opened their mouth wide against me, and said, Aha! Aha! our eye hath seen it." The language is that which we use when we detect another in doing wrong, in doing that which he meant to conceal. It means this, "They mocked at my distress with contemptuous grimaces, and rejoiced in the fulfilment of their spiteful wishes."

Ver. 22.—"This thou hast seen, O Lord: keep not silence: O Lord, be not far from me." Rebuke them with thy voice, and draw near to me.

Ver. 23.—"Stir up thyself." That is, "awake, as from slumber." See Psalm xlv. 33. "Awake to my judgment." This means, avenge me of mine enemies.

Ver. 24.—"Judge me, O Lord my God, according to thy righteousness." "Do me justice, clear me from aspersion, grant an attestation of my innocence, in the exercise and exhibition of Thine own essential rectitude, and in accordance with that covenant relation which exists between us; and thus, in the most effectual manner, take away from my malignant enemies all pretext and occasion for exulting in my overthrow, or otherwise triumphing at my expense."

Ver. 26.—"Let them be ashamed and brought to confusion together that rejoice at mine hurt," &c. There is nothing either in this or the two following verses that needs any special exegetical remark.

ARGUMENT. See page 76.

HOMILETICS. The verses now under consideration conclude the Psalm which we have regarded as a specimen of *revenge in prayer*. Though the verses be many, our homiletical remarks will be few. First: Because their spirit is somewhat uncongenial with our sympathies. Secondly: Because they do not suggest to us many reflections of a very elevated character.

The prayer of revenge in this Psalm we have already remarked seems *despicably presumptuous* and *utterly merciless*.

In these verses it appears in another aspect, as *egotistically pious*.*

That there is a spirit of piety running through the whole is too manifest to question. The religious element was at all times more or less strong in the mind of David, but there is an egotism here, a self-consciousness that is essentially incompatible with piety in its healthier and higher type. The reason of this is obvious. His heart has come under the strong influence of personal revenge, a passion antagonistic to genuine godliness. This passion, as it burns within him, whilst it does not destroy the sentiment of piety, sadly perverts it, intensifies his self-consciousness, and raises him above every other object. His egotism is seen here in three things :—

I. He tells the Almighty how WICKED HIS ENEMIES WERE AND HOW GOOD HE WAS. Observe, first : His description of the *wickedness of his enemies*. (1) They were slanderers. "False witnesses," &c., dealing in calumny. (2) They were ungrateful. "They rewarded me evil for good," &c. (3) They were malignant. "In mine adversity they rejoiced," &c. "They did tear me." "They gnashed upon me with their teeth." "They hated me without a cause." "They opened their mouth wide against me," &c. (See verses 15—21.) In such terms he represents their wickedness. We are far enough from saying that all he states was not perfectly true concerning them ; the point we wish to observe is, that his being so thoroughly alive to all the phases and features of their wickedness in his appeals to Heaven, shows the power of his revenge. How unlike Him, the world's Divine Model of virtue and the Final Judge of mankind, Who in the agonies of death prayed for His murderers, "Father, forgive them, they know not what they do." Observe, secondly : His description of *his own goodness*. He tells us that for them he had the utmost compassion. "As for me, when they were sick, my clothing was sackcloth"

* *Errata*.—On the 7th, 8th, and 9th lines on the 9th page of the present volume of *HOMILIST*, for "presumptuously coward," read "despicably presumptuous ;" and for "piously egotistic," read "egotistically pious."

(ver. 13, 14). In him there was no cause for hurt (ver. 19). He was one of those that loved peace, and were "quiet in the land" (ver. 20). As a rule, the prayers of this great and good man breathed penitence. As he addressed Immaculate Purity he felt humbled to the dust, but here he appears all but perfect in his own eyes, he seems thoroughly unconscious of any moral defect. This can only be explained by that flame of revenge within him which, whilst it revealed his enemies in all their enormity, threw no light whatever on his own personal imperfections. His egotism is seen here in another way :—

II. He IMPORES THE ALMIGHTY TO INTERFERE FOR THE DESTRUCTION OF HIS ENEMIES, AND FOR THE HAPPINESS OF HIMSELF AND FRIENDS. First: He seeks the *destruction of his enemies*. "Let them be ashamed and brought to confusion together that rejoice at mine hurt: let them be clothed with shame and dishonour that magnify themselves against me." This is a repetition of the imprecations in the 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th, and 8th verses, which have been already noticed. He does not ask that their eyes may be opened to see their wickedness in order that they may repent and be saved. No, nothing but destruction for them; and destruction not because they are the enemies of others or enemies to God, but because they are *his* enemies. Secondly: He seeks the *happiness of himself and friends*. (1) Of himself. "Rescue my soul, my darling," &c. (ver. 17). "O Lord, be not far from me" (ver. 22). "Awake to my judgment" (ver. 23). Supremely anxious is he for himself. Self-sacrifice, which is an element in all true piety, is not to be found here; self is all. (2) Of his friends. "Let them shout for joy, and be glad, that favour my righteous cause: yea, let them say continually, Let the Lord be magnified, which hath pleasure in the prosperity of his servant." Curse my enemies, but bless my friends. Here is selfishness again!

His egotism is seen here in another way :—

III. He PROMISES THE ALMIGHTY TO PRAISE HIM ON THE CONDITION THAT HIS ENEMIES ARE PUNISHED AND HE IS SAVED.

"I will give thee thanks in the great congregation: I will praise thee among much people." The "mighty people" it should be rendered. I will laud thee amongst the mightiest of the land if thou wilt only interpose and crush my enemies! "And my tongue shall speak of thy righteousness and of thy praise all the day long."

CONCLUSION. From the whole learn, First: *The liability of the best men to sink into wrong spiritual moods.* David was a good man, one of the excellent of the earth, but he often failed—failed both in his relations to man and in his relation to God. "There is not a just man on the earth that doeth good and sinneth not." Impeccability belongeth not to mortals. Our best spiritual moods are not fixed like the stars, but unsettled like the atmosphere. "Hold thou us up, and we shall be safe!" It requires the remedial discipline of a whole life to raise us to perfection; the ladder to it is like the ladder Jacob saw, which reached from earth to heaven. We cannot by a bound spring from the bottom to the top, but we must step from rung to rung without missing one. Learn from the whole:—

Secondly: *The honesty of Biblical biography.* Uninspired biographies, as a rule, so ignore and palliate the imperfections of their heroes, and so magnify and multiply their virtues, as to make them appear more like angels than men on their page. Not so with the Bible. It gives the man as he really was, with the blots of sin upon him as well as the corruscations of virtue. It assures us that there has only one really perfect Man ever appeared on the earth; the best of all others have their imperfections, and it records them. For this, as well as for countless other reasons, we thank God for the Bible!

"What hast thou here? A book: but what a book!
Another such, nor hath been, nor shall be
Of universal love th' epitomé,
The oracles the Everlasting spoke.
A mirror into which, whoe'er will look,
The past and future shall reflected see:
A spiritual cosmorama, showing thee

What ne'er on th' eye of loftiest fancy broke.
 Yea, as the shell found on some foreign shore,
 And carried many a thousand mile away,
 Retains in its recesses evermore
 The modulations of its native sea,
 So in this heaven-born Book the instructed ear
 The music of eternity may hear."

Church of England Magazine.

Homiletic Sketches on the Book of Job.

The Book of Job is one of the grandest sections of Divine Scripture. It has never yet, to our knowledge, been treated in a purely Homiletic method for Homiletic ends. Besides many learned expositions on the book found in our general commentaries, we have special exegetical volumes of good scholarly and critical worth; such as Drs. Barnes, Wemyss, Mason Goode, Noyes Lee, Delitzsch, and Herman Hedwick Bernard: the last is in every way a masterly production. For us, therefore, to go into philology and verbal criticism, when such admirable works are available to all students, would be superfluous, if not presumption. Ambiguous terms, when they occur, we shall of course explain, and occasionally suggest an improved rendering: but our work will be chiefly, if not entirely, Homiletic. We shall essay to bring out from the grand old words those Divine verities which are true and vital to man as man in all lands and ages. These truths we shall frame in an order as philosophic and suggestive as our best powers will enable us to do; and this in order to help the earnest preachers of God's Holy Word.

**Subject.—Job's Reply to Bildad. (2.) His Language to the
Eternal. (b.) Concerning his Sufferings.**

My soul is weary of my life;
 I will leave my complaint upon myself;
 I will speak in the bitterness of my soul.
 I will say unto God, Do not condemn me;
 Show me wherefore thou contendest with me;
 Is it good unto thee that thou shouldest oppress,
 That thou shouldest despise the work of thine hands,
 And shine upon the counsel of the wicked?
 Hast thou eyes of flesh?
 Or seest thou as man seeth?

Are thy days as the days of man ?
 Are thy years as man's days,
 That thou inquirest after mine iniquity,
 And searchest after my sin ?
 Thou knowest that I am not wicked ;
 And there is none that can deliver out of thine hand.
 Thine hands have made me and fashioned me
 Together round about ; yet thou dost destroy me.
 Remember, I beseech thee, that thou hast made me as the clay ;
 And wilt thou bring me into dust again ?
 Hast thou not poured me out as milk,
 And curdled me like cheese ?
 Thou hast clothed me with skin and flesh,
 And hast fenced me with bones and sinews.
 Thou hast granted me life and favour,
 And thy visitation hath preserved my spirit.
 And these things hast thou hid in thine heart :
 I know that this is with thee.
 If I sin, then thou markest me,
 And thou wilt not acquit me from mine iniquity.
 If I be wicked, woe unto me ;
 And if I be righteous, yet will I not lift up my head.
 I am full of confusion ; therefore see thou mine affliction ;
 For it increaseth. Thou huntest me as a fierce lion :
 And again thou showest thyself marvellous upon me.
 Thou renewest thy witnesses against me,
 And increasest thine indignation upon me ;
 Changes and war are against me.—Job x. 1—17.

EXEGETICAL REMARKS. *Vers. 1—3.*—"My soul is weary of my life," &c. &c. "In the preceding chapter Job had said (vers. 34, 35) that, if God would but remove His wrath from him, he would fearlessly speak out his mind : now he goes further still, and says that, even while still labouring under his afflictions, he will give free course to his words, seeing that if the worst comes to the worst, he can only lose a life which has become a burden to him."—*Dr. Bernard.* The idea of these verses is,—I cannot any longer repress the feeling that my anguish produces within me. I will give myself up to complaint. "*Show me wherefore thou contendest with me.*" Do not in the exercise of Thy uncontrollable power deal arbitrarily with me ; give me Thy reason for thus afflicting me. "*Is it good unto thee that thou shouldest oppress ?*" Is it agreeable to Thy nature ? Does it gratify Thee to afflict me in this way ?

Ver. 4—6.—"Hast thou eyes of flesh !" &c., &c. The idea here is,—

Dost Thou look upon man with the same desire to detect faults, and punish him, as characterises man? Art Thou as unkind as the men who torture me with their reasonings?

Ver. 7.—"Thou knowest that I am not wicked; and there is none that can deliver out of thine hand." By being "not wicked," he does not mean that he was not a sinner before his Maker, but that he was not a hypocrite, as his friends had imagined him to be. "Thou knowest." *Marg.*: "It is upon thy knowledge that I am not wicked."

Ver. 8-11.—"Thine hands have made me (*Marg.*: "Took pains about me") and fashioned me together round about," &c. Here is a description of the formation of the human body agreeing well with modern science. "*Hast thou not poured me out as milk, and curdled me like cheese?*" "The whole passage, including the two following verses, is usually considered to furnish an account, no less just than beautiful, of the origin and growth of the human creature. Dr. Good, who translates, 'Didst Thou not mingle me as milk, and consolidate me as cheese?' considers that it refers to milk as the sustaining principle of man's existence. He says, 'The whole of the simile is highly correct and beautiful, and has not been neglected by the best poets of Greece and Rome. From the well-tempered or mingled milk of the chyle, every individual atom of every individual organ in the animal frame, the most compact and consolidated as well as the soft and pliable, is perpetually supplied and renewed, through the medium of a system of lacteals or milk-vessels, as they are usually called in anatomy, from the nature of this common chyle or milk which they circulate. Into the delicate stomach of the infant it is usually introduced in the form of milk; but even in the adult it must be reduced to some such form, whatever be the substance he feeds on, by the conjoint action of the stomach and other chylofactive organs, before it can become the basis of animal nutriment. It then circulates through the system, and either continues fluid, as milk in its simple state, or is rendered solid, as milk in its caseous or cheese state, according to the nature of the organ which it supplies with its vital current.'—*Kitto*."

Ver. 13.—"And these things." Either the things accomplished in his creation or preservation mentioned in the preceding verses, or the calamities under which he was now suffering. "*Hast Thou hid in thine heart?*" All this was according to a known purpose in Thine own mind.

Ver. 14, 15.—"If I sin, then thou markest me," &c. "The object of these verses is evidently to say that he was wholly perplexed. He did not know how to act. He could not understand the reason of the Divine dealings, and he was wholly unable to explain them, and hence he did not know how to act in a proper manner. It is expressive of a state of mind

where the individual wishes to think and feel right, but where he finds so much to perplex him that he does not know what to do."—*Barnes*.

Ver. 16.—"For it increaseth. Thou huntest me as a fierce lion," &c. "When a lion hunts its prey, the victim, however great its terror, at least sees by whom it is hunted; but when it flies, conscious of being pursued, yet unable to discern its pursuer, then there must be something supernatural at work; in other words, God must be the huntsman. So reasons our unfortunate victim, Job: I am being hunted, he says, yet I cannot see the huntsman: I know then it must be God who hunts me: a very marvellous and wonderful feat no doubt, but is it also glorious? Is it befitting His majesty to display His wonderful power in such a manner?"—*Bernard*.

Ver. 17.—"Thou renewest thy witnesses against me, and increasest thine indignation upon me." His multiplying trials he regarded as a succession of witnesses to prove his guilt. "Changes and war are against me." His idea seems to be that his affliction came upon him in a succession, like soldiers in a battle, when one is worn out and crushed, another battalion appears.

HOMILETICS. The subject of Job's appeal to God in these verses is the same as that we noticed in our previous sketch, viz., the greatness of his sufferings. In the last eight verses of the preceding chapter, he had indicated that his sufferings had been *too great to render any efforts at self-consolation effective, and as too deserved to justify any hope of relief*. Here he indicates a third point, viz., THAT THEY WERE TOO OVERWHELMING TO CHECK THE EXPRESSION OF HIS COMPLAINT. "My soul is weary of my life; I will leave my complaint upon myself." So intolerable had his anguish become, that repression was no longer possible; and in his distress he appeals to the Almighty, and says, "Show me wherefore thou contendest with me." Why, oh why is it that I am so tortured by the God that made me? In his appeal, extending from the second to the seventeenth verses, he regards his sufferings in four aspects:—

I. AS INCONSISTENT WITH ALL HIS IDEAS OF HIS MAKER.
First: As inconsistent with His *goodness*. "Is it good unto thee that thou shouldest oppress, that thou shouldest despise the work of thine hands?" I thought Thee benevolent and

merciful, but in my suffering I feel Thee to be malign. Where is Thy goodness in thus afflicting Thy creatures? There is a strong tendency in all men under suffering to regard the Almighty as anything but good. None but those who feel their afflictions to be most deserved and most disciplinary, can see the hand of a loving Father in their chastisements. To all heaven-born souls afflictions are blessings in disguise.

Secondly: As inconsistent with His *justice*. "And shine upon the counsel of the wicked." Job saw wicked men around him, strong and hale in body, buoyant in animal spirits, and prosperous in worldly affairs, whilst he who was in his deepest heart in sympathy with right and the God of right, was reduced to the utmost distress. He failed to see justice in this. What suffering saint in any age or land has not felt the same? It is that enigma in the Divine government of mankind which awaits eternity to settle. "Wherefore doth the wicked prosper?" &c., &c. Yes, wherefore? This is the problem that stands unsolved through the ages.

Thirdly: As inconsistent with His *greatness*. "Hast thou eyes of flesh? or seest thou as man seeth? Are thy days as the days of man? are thy years as man's days?" Art Thou, like ill-natured and suspicious men, ever anxious to descry defects in others, and pursue them with punishment? And art Thou, like them, in haste to do so because their days are short, and their lives are brief? I cannot reconcile the sufferings with which Thou afflictest an insignificant creature like me with Thine omniscience and eternity. "What is man, that Thou shouldest thus visit him?" Verily, wonderful it is that He to Whom the universe is as nothing should deign to notice, either in the way of cursing or blessing, a creature so insignificant.

He regards his sufferings—

II. As AN UNRIGHTEOUS DISPLAY OF ARBITRARY POWER. "Thou knowest that I am not wicked; and there is none that can deliver out of thine hand." Job does not mean to imply

that he felt himself to be absolutely holy; what he means is, that Omniscience knew he was not guilty of that hypocrisy with which his friends had charged him. He knew he was an "upright man," that "feared God" and "eschewed evil," and his Maker knew it, for He Himself had pronounced him such. Where, then, is the righteousness of his afflictions? He seems to say,—The hand that afflicts me is the ruthless, arbitrary hand of a tyrant, a hand from which "there is none that can deliver" me. His idea of God was a very terrible one, one that seemed driven into him by his sufferings, and one that must have greatly intensified his anguish. Unhappy man! For a moment he seemed to feel in the hand of God as a dove under the paw of a lion. Blessed be Heaven, this idea is as false as it is terrible! He does not exert His Almighty energy either without reason or with reasons that are malevolent, but evermore does He act from reasons transcendent in wisdom and love.

He regards his sufferings—

III. AS CONTRARY TO WHAT THE DIVINE ORGANISATION AND PRESERVATION OF HIS EXISTENCE LED HIM TO EXPECT. In the eighth and the two following verses he ascribes the formation of his body to God. "Thine hands have made me and fashioned me," &c., &c. The description, as we have seen, that he here gives of the process by which he was organised accords even with modern physiology. "Hast thou not poured me out as milk?" &c. The physiology of our genesis, nourishment, growth, development, is one of the most interesting and profound of studies. We are "fearfully and wonderfully made." God's hand is seen in all. But not only does Job ascribe the origin and formation of his existence to God, but his sustentation as well. "Thou hast granted me life and favour, and thy visitation hath preserved my spirit." He seemed astonished that the God who thus produced and supported him should thus mar his beauty, destroy his health, and overwhelm him with misery. Does the sculptor mould the marble into the forms and graces of life in order to break it to pieces? Does the gardener culti-

vate his flowers that he may trample them in the dust as soon as they unfold their loveliness and emit their fragrance? Does the architect pile up his cathedral in order to pull it to pieces? No. Why, then, does the Almighty, the Maker of our frame, shatter us into ruin by His afflicting dispensations? This is what Job seems to have felt. This is, in truth, a perplexity to us as well as to Job. One might have supposed that He Who formed a creature so exquisite in organisation as man, would have guarded its beauty and preserved its existence for ever. Will God reduce His Madonnas to corruption? Antecedently we should have said no; and we are shocked when we see them prostrated with loathsome diseases, and cold and ghastly in the clutch of death.

He regards his sufferings—

IV. AS BAFFLING ALL HIS ATTEMPTS TO UNDERSTAND: "And these things hast thou hid in thine heart." If there is a reason, it is in Thy heart shut up and hid from me, and I cannot reach it. "If I sin, then thou markest me, and thou wilt not acquit me from mine iniquity. If I be wicked, woe unto me; and if I be righteous, yet will I not lift up my head. I am full of confusion; therefore seest thou mine affliction." Yes, "full of confusion." The more he thought the more was he embarrassed with the mysteries of his being. This confusion, he intimates in the sixteenth and seventeenth verses, instead of lessening, augmented. "For it increaseth. Thou huntest me as a fierce lion: and again Thou showest Thyself marvellous upon me. Thou renewest Thy witnesses against me, and increasest Thy indignation upon me; changes and war are against me." As his sufferings came upon him, "fierce as a lion," destroying not its victim at the first attack, but retreating in order to give another spring, God's conduct became more "marvellous" to him. Every new affliction seemed so many "witnesses" against him, and evidences of Divine "indignation." Thus, he was indeed "full of confusion," baffled at all points, at his wits' end.

CONCLUSION. Learn from this—First: The *greatness of man's capability for suffering*. To what inexpressible wretchedness

and agony was Job now reduced, both in soul and in body. That organisation, fitted by Almighty Love to sustain an "eternal weight of glory," is capable of enduring immeasurable anguish. The greatness of man's nature may be read in the greatness of his sufferings as well as in the greatness of his enjoyments. The ocean torn by a tempest shows its grandeur as much as when it smiles serenely in the face of the sun. Learn, Secondly : *The absoluteness of God's power over us.* We are in His hands as "clay in the hands of the potter," and He can do for us whatever seems good in His sight. He can make every nerve and faculty quiver in agony or thrill with ineffable delight. We are in His hands, all of us. From His grasp none can extricate himself; His will determines the destiny of all. How great is God! Learn, Thirdly : *The value of Christianity as an interpreter of suffering.* Job's great "confusion" in his suffering seemed to arise from the idea that unless a man was a great sinner there was no reason for great suffering. The Gospel doctrine had not beamed on his soul—that afflictions to good men are disciplinary, not punitive. As vines bear the better for bleeding, and flowers emit a more delicious aroma after having been pelted with the rain, so will the true soul improve by afflictions. A blind man once said to Rev. C. Simeon, "I never saw till I was blind;" by which he meant that his affliction opened the eyes of his soul. An old writer has said there is "as much difference between the sufferings of the saints and those of the ungodly, as between the cords with which an executioner pinions a condemned malefactor and the bandage with which a surgeon binds up his patient's wounds." As the frosty winds of winter kill pernicious vermin and grubs, so afflictions to the good tend to destroy the depravities of the heart.

"Suffering curbs our wayward passions,
Childlike tempers in us fashions,
And our will to His subdues :
Thus His hand, so soft and healing,
Each disordered power and feeling,
By a blessed change renews.

"Suffering keeps the thoughts compacted,
 That the soul be not distracted
 By the world's beguiling art ;
 'Tis like some angelic warder,
 Ever keeping sacred order
 In the chambers of the heart.

"Suffering tunes the heart's devotion
 To eternity's devotion,
 And awakes a fond desire
 For the land where psalms are ringing,
 And with psalms the martyrs singing,
 Sweetly to the harpers' choir."

J. Hartmann.

Sermonic Glances at the Gospel of St. John.

As our purpose in the treatment of this Gospel is purely the development, in the briefest and most suggestive form, of Sermonic outlines, we must refer our readers to the following works for all critical inquiries into the author and authorship of the book, and also for any minute criticisms on difficult clauses. The works we shall especially consult are :—"Introduction to New Testament," by Bleek ; "Commentary on John," by Tholuck ; "Commentary on John," by Hengstenberg ; "Introduction to the Study of the Gospels," by Westcott ; "The Gospel History," by Ebrard ; "Our Lord's Divinity," by Liddon ; "St. John's Gospel," by Oosterzee ; "Doctrine of the Person of Christ," by Dornor ; Lange ; &c., &c.

Subject.—The World's Redemptive Faith.

"And many of the Samaritans of that city believed on him for the saying of the woman, which testified, He told me all that ever I did. So when the Samaritans were come unto him, they besought him that he would tarry with them : and he abode there two days. And many more believed because of his own word ; and said unto the woman, Now we believe, not because of thy saying : for we have heard him ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world."—John iv. 39—42.

EXPOSITION. *Vcr. 39.*—"Many of the Samaritans of that city." This is a splendid commentary of the thirty-fifth verse, the fields are "white

already for harvest." "*Believed on him.*" Not merely as a good man, a great prophet, or a grand philosopher, but as the Messiah, the "Saviour of the world." "The Messiah," says Hengstenberg, "is represented as the Saviour of the world in that one of the few Messianic passages in the Pentateuch to which the Samaritans were restricted, Gen. xlix. 50. According to which the nations shall adhere to the Shiloh, the peaceful and peace-bringer." "*For the saying of the woman, which testified, He told me all that ever I did.*" The brief record of the conversation of our Saviour with the woman at the well of Jacob does not contain all that He had spoken to her. In that conversation as recorded He told her of her domestic unchastities, but here she seems to have informed the Samaritans that He told her all things that ever she did. He spread out the moral of her whole life before her, so that she felt He was the Omniscient One. Because of her testimony concerning His thorough knowledge of her, the Samaritans believed.

Ver. 40.—"*So when the Samaritans where come unto him.*" This woman had invited them in the thirtieth verse to come to Him, and now, according to her wish, they approach Him. They are brought face to face with that wonderful Person of whom she had been speaking. "*They besought him that he would tarry with them: and he abode there two days.*" They pray, and He answers; they make a request, and He replies. He continued two days with them. We should like to have had a record of these two days' talking and working in the city of Samaria. How many disciples did He win during those two days? It is worthy of remark, that after His resurrection, whilst we only find a few who believed in Him in other places, that He appeared to five hundred brethren in Galilee (1 Cor. xv. 6). "*The field was ripe unto harvest.*"

Ver. 41, 42.—"*And many more believed because of his own word; and said unto the woman, Now we believe, not because of thy saying: for we have heard him ourselves.*" They had believed in Him to a certain degree because of the woman's word concerning Him, but now they arose to a higher faith; "We have heard him ourselves." "*And know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world.*" "In the expression, *ὁ σωτὴρ τοῦ κόσμου*, "the Saviour of the world" is signified, the universality of the Messiah's destination. That the people actually employed this expression cannot be maintained positively; nevertheless this very destination of a universal character was, on the ground of the Old Testament prophecies, acknowledged by every pious Israelite (Luke ii. 32)."—*Tholuck.*

HOMEILETICS. The subject of these verses is *the world's redemptive faith*. The world has many faiths. Men are con-

stitutionally credulous, and their curse is that they believe too much, rather than too little. Faith lies at the root of all human activities, institutions, pursuits; and the state of the whole world, socially, politically, and religiously, is according to its faith. All modifications in the outward life of the world must begin in an alteration of its faiths.

There is only one *redemptive* faith: faith to emancipate the soul from the bondage of prejudice, guilt, materialism, and moral depravity in all its forms, and that faith appears in these words.

Observe two things:—

I. The grand OBJECT of the world's redemptive faith. That object is Christ. Observe here three things concerning Him.

First: He *thoroughly knows all pertaining to human life*. "He told me," said the woman, "all that ever I did." The conversation which the woman had with Him made her feel that He was thoroughly cognisant not only with all the items in her outward conduct, but with all the secret workings of her inner life. She felt that He had read her through and through, and her conclusion from the fact was that He was Divine, and the true Messiah. When she told the Samaritans His knowledge of her they seemed to believe at once in His Divinity. The object of the world's redemptive faith is One—a Person Who thoroughly understands it, knows all that it has ever done, knows its entire history from its roots, through all its ramifications.

Secondly: He *is susceptible to human appeals*. "So when the Samaritans were come unto Him, they besought Him that He would tarry with them: and He abode there two days." He not only thoroughly knows the world, but He has a heart that inclines Him to yield to its appeals for help. The cry of Bartimeus arrested Him on His road; the entreaties of the travellers to Emmaus induced Him to turn in and tarry with them; and here the request of the Samaritans caused Him to abide with them two days.

Thirdly: He is *the Restorer of mankind*. "This is Christ

the Saviour of the world." τοῦ κόσμου, the Saviour, not of the Jew only, but of the Gentile also; not of a class, but of all the races and sects that make up humanity.

Now this is the Object of the world's redemptive faith. It will never be saved by believing in Creeds, Churches, or priesthods; it must believe on Him Who knows it, feels for it, and came to save it. "He that believeth on Me shall be saved." Observe:—

II. The grand grounds of the world's redemptive faith. These grounds are here: one is testimony, and the other is consciousness; the one is a preliminary faith, the other is a perfect faith. First: The *initiatory* faith. This faith is built on testimony. The Samaritans believed because "of the saying of the woman." In their initial faith they accepted two things: (1) Omniscience as a proof of Divinity. The saying of the woman was, "He told me all that ever I did;" and they felt intuitively that He Who could thus tell out the whole history of human life was Divine. Who but God can read the heart? Every man feels that there is no one that can know him thoroughly but the God Who made him. You have only to convince me that such a being knows all about human life in order to establish my faith in His supernaturalness, nay, in His Divinity. They accepted (2) The credibility of the woman's testimony. They believed what she said concerning Him was true. Why did they believe in her credibility? Because they could see that she believed. He who believes in a thing, and he only who believes in a Divine thing, has the power to inspire faith. This woman's faith was manifest in her movements, in her expressions, in the ring of her voice. She believed. The Word in her "became flesh," and was made manifest. Hence her influence. She seemed to have moved the city in a few hours. From what she said the Samaritans believed, came unto Him, and besought Him to tarry with them. Oh! the power of one earnest soul!

This initiatory faith was a faith in testimony, and here generally all faith in Christ begins: it is faith in the testimony of those who have seen and heard Him, a traditional faith. This

is the faith of all mere nominal Christians. Secondly: The *consummating* faith. "And many more believed because of His own word." This faith was (1) intuitive. As soon as they saw and heard Christ for themselves, they felt at once that He was the Messiah. His truths agreed with their reason and their aspirations, and His character with their ideal. They required no argument; the Incarnate Word commended itself. This faith was (2) direct. "We have heard Him ourselves." We heard of Him through thee, thou woman of Samaria, and we intellectually accepted the fact that He is the Messiah; but now that "we have heard Him ourselves" we *know* He is. We know His voice; it chimes in with the Divine echoes of our nature. It is the voice we have been long craving to hear. This faith was (3) certain. "And know that this is indeed the Christ." We have no doubt about it. The man who has this faith, which springs from the felt congruity of Christ with the deepest things of his soul, is independent of all other evidences, and can stand firmly against all the hostile reasons of infidelity. They say—All your logic is worthless; "we know that He is indeed the Christ."

CONCLUSION. Here, then, is the soul-redemptive faith,—faith in the all-knowing, all-loving Saviour of the world; faith grounded not merely on the testimony of others, but on the revelation of Himself to the human soul. This is the faith that is sadly lacking throughout Christendom. Traditional faith abounds, and it is often worse than useless. O speed the day when God Who "commanded the light to shine out of darkness, shall shine into the heart of the world, giving it the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ!"

Germs of Thought.

WEEK-NIGHT SKETCHES ON THE FIRST BOOK OF SAMUEL.

No. X.

Subject.—The Public Recognition of Incipient Kingship.

“And Samuel called the people together unto the Lord to Mizpeh; and said unto the children of Israel, Thus saith the Lord God of Israel.”—Chap. x. 17—25.

SAUL has now reached an important crisis in his history. The past is behind him, and a new future opens to his tread. Nor is he unprepared for it; during the last few days his soul has been enlarged with ideas direct from heaven; his nature has been purified by contact with rich spiritual influences; and his character enriched by the discipline from which it has emerged. And now the time is come, no longer must he remain in solitude, merely conscious of promotion; he must enter at once, before an assembled nation, upon the public work of exalted office. Long enough had Saul been in the divine studio, and fashioned by heavenly forces, his nature comes forth in power to enter upon life's joy, and also to grapple with its difficulties. In this recognition of incipient kingship we have—

I. A REJECTION OF THE DIVINE. The last embers of the old Jewish Theocracy are smouldering into extinction. In a few moments the last spark will be put out, and that ancient grate will contain nothing but the cinders of the past, and this vast concourse of people will be shivering in the coldness of an untried monarchy. The rejection of the divine king:—

1. *It was public.* “And Samuel called the people together unto the Lord to Mizpeh” (ver. 17). The establishment of this

- new mode of government was not merely the desire of a few churlish aristocrats, who, prompted by ambition, hoped to gain offices of distinction in the new administration; nor was it the wish of a few demagogues, whose every power was devoted to revolution; the people in general were there, animated by one common hope of a future king. Either this was the case, or public opinion was so strong that any opposition dare not express itself, as none is recorded. And thus this perplexed race, in this place of grand old memories, renounces the God of its hope and the fountain of its strength.

2. *This rejection was ungrateful.* "And ye have this day rejected your God, who himself saved you out of all your adversities and your tribulations" (ver. 19). Like the planets nearest the sun, filled with light, and cheered with heat; so these Israelites had been fixed in the moral heavens near to the Infinite Being, who had thrown upon them the light of His infinite mind, and given to them the sympathy of His loving heart; and thus blessed they now openly reject His future help! What ingratitude for a nation who had so frequently been delivered from imminent peril, from national ruin, and even from slavery, thus to deny Him who had been its refuge! These people appear to unheed the truest instincts of their hearts, and to disregard the deepest sympathies of human friendship. It is almost natural for man to love his Benefactor—no effort would be considered too arduous, no sacrifice too great to repay His kindness. But how this nation, in the blindness of its prejudice, in the loftiness of its pride, and in the deep passion of its hope, forgets or denies the obligation of the past.

3. *This rejection was wilful.* "And ye have this day rejected your God" (ver. 19). It was not a mere frantic impulse that had taken possession of the national heart; nor had the petty orations of a renegade politician aroused the people to a temporary revolution. It was a matter of fixed purpose, pursued in opposition to many entreaties, numerous warnings, and constant communications from God as to the ultimate issue. Nor did they try to conceal the criminality of their

request by any pretext or excuse. So high was their determination that they urged the bare request, prepared to stand by it to the end.

4. *This rejection was reprehensible.* "Ye have this day rejected your God." Here was sounded in the national ear at once its crime and folly. To reject that Being who could sweep them into nothingness with a blow!

5. *This rejection was tolerated.* "Now therefore present yourselves before the Lord by your tribes, and by your thousands" (ver. 19). The Divine Being frequently permits nations to have their own way, to pursue their own plans; and thus throwing themselves out of the chart of providence, they are soon loosed on the wild ocean, until they are wrecked upon the predicted reefs. So it was with Israel. They took themselves out of the hand of God and placed their interests under the control of another; and the unrest which characterised their after life, the servitude which followed, and the great weakness which came upon them, reveal their punishment and shame.

II. A CORONATION OF THE HUMAN.

1. *The method according to which Saul was chosen.* "And when Samuel had caused all the tribes of Israel to come near, the tribe of Benjamin was taken" (ver. 20, 21).

(1.) The tribes were *universally presented*.

(2.) The tribes were *universally minutely inspected*.

Of course Samuel knew who was to be the future king, but yet he went through the ceremony of selecting him. Why?

(1.) *To show that the prior discipline of life is private in its nature.*

The discipline of every life is simply a matter between God and the soul immediately concerned; no other presence has a right to intrude upon its sanctity; and God himself will shield it from the knowledge of others; and especially when the discipline is preparatory in its nature, rather than penal. Hence Samuel permits this clamouring nation to remain ignorant of Saul's prior history, and proceeds as if nothing had occurred.

(2.) *To complete the satisfaction of the people.* Had this method of choice not been adopted, and had Saul been made king merely upon the grounds of his previous training, the people would have suspected favouritism, and have rebelled against the decision. But now they cannot; all are placed on the same level, and therefore equally possess a like chance for the new office.

Here we see—

(3.) *That God does not despise the humbler circles of life.* Saul was taken from the tribe of Benjamin. Many imagine that because they are poor, that they are despised by men, and also forgotten or neglected by God. But such is not the case. The meanest family, that live in the humblest cot, are equally before His eye with the more favoured tribe; and for all we know, the Divine Being may one day call to select a king from its midst.

2. *Saul's modesty is worthy of observation.* "And the Lord answered, Behold, he hath hid himself among the stuff" (ver. 22). This shows the effectiveness of the divine discipline through which Saul had passed, and proves that he was the fit man for the office of kingship. Few men would run from kingship. Its pageantry would suit their pride too well; its sceptre would meet their ambition, and its flattery would feed their weakness. But Saul looked more at its responsibility than at its emolument. Some men, when called to posts of authority, exhibit a mock modesty, and hide themselves behind the stuff of life, but they take care to get where there are plenty of holes through which they may be seen, lest their compeers should stop in the search. Saul's was genuine modesty, and modesty never loses anything by being real, for it is in such request that men pray for its discovery (ver. 22).

3. *Saul's reception by the people.*

(1.) *What recommended him to them?*

(2.) *It was enthusiastic.* No doubt there were many disappointed hearts, but the general cry was, God save the king.

4. *The sacredness of national history* (ver. 25).

5. *The conduct of Samuel in this crisis.*

(1.) *Judicious.* (2.) *Brave.*

Lessons:—

(1.) *That the Divine goodness is an argument for human obedience.*

(2.) *That good men have frequently to do things contrary to their wishes.*

(3.) *That occasionally good men must yield, in the Providence of God, to the desires of wicked people.*

(4.) *That when good men yield to the requests of disobedient foes, they must proclaim the future consequences.*

Peterborough.

JOSEPH S. EXELL.

Subject.—Certainties and Uncertainties.

“Cast thy bread upon the waters: for thou shalt find it after many days.”—Eccles. xi. 1.

IN the dispensation of divine government there are things known and unknown, things certain and uncertain. In the view of God all things are alike certain. He knoweth all, He controlleth all; but in respect to man, some things are unknown, uncertain, unknowable; still he bears a certain relation to them.

I will point out some of the certainties and uncertainties.

I. THERE ARE CERTAINTIES AND UNCERTAINTIES IN REFERENCE TO GOD. 1. *He is the supreme and original worker.* That is stated in very explicit terms in v. 5: “Even so thou knowest not the works of God who maketh all.”

Let our minds and heart open at once to this great first fact: God worketh all, His wisdom plans, His power executes, and His love reigns over all.

(1.) The method is unknown. The inspired philosopher gives two other instances of things unknown and unknowable by us. One is—Human formation. “How the bones do grow,” &c. The other is—The operations of the mind. “What is

the way of the Spirit?" We believe in the fact of mind, as a thing distinct from matter, but we do not know how this mind operates, nor how it was first begotten by the Father of Spirits. The same truth is illustrated by the material creation, &c.

II. THERE ARE CERTAINTIES AND UNCERTAINTIES IN REFERENCE TO PROVIDENCE. 1. *Man's agency is subordinate.* There are things certain belonging to man as the subject, minister, interpreter, symbol, of God and of Providence. He is a subordinate agent in their execution. "In the morning, sow," &c.

(1.) Activity is the distinction of man. Look at arts and sciences, and civilisation, and you need not look anywhere else. Every man is a worker. (2.) The world must go back unless man will work. Certainly this is a period that demands minds to take a comprehensive view of the government of God.

2. *Man must work according to certain laws.* The laws are above him. By the laws of matter we understand the laws of God; by the powers of matter, the powers of God; and man cannot change them, the seasons of the year confirm this. "Cast thy bread upon the waters," &c. It is not certain you shall reap all you sow, but it is absolutely certain you cannot reap unless you sow.

III. THERE ARE CERTAINTIES IN REFERENCE TO SOCIETY. "Give a portion to seven, and also to eight," &c. 1. *That men have certain moral and spiritual duties to discharge.* 2. *That the latent evil of the human heart is liable to explosion.* Conclusion:—1. *Cultivate as much as possible your thinking powers.* 2. *Let not the uncertainties connected with Providence tempt you either to indolence or to despondency.* 3. *Work in faith through the power of God.* "The race is not to the swift nor the battle to the strong," &c.

CALEB MORRIS.

The Preacher's Scrap Room.

SHORT ESSAYS.

SORROW FOR THE LOSS OF THE IDEAL.

EVERY parent knows that, as Wordsworth finely expresses it—

“A child, more than all other gifts
That earth can offer to declining man,
Brings hope with it, and forward-looking thoughts.”

But, so far as I can remember, I have never met with the idea, which I nevertheless believe to be true, namely, that a large measure of the misery which the father or mother experiences at the death of a child is occasioned by the loss of anticipation. The parent not only misses the beautiful living presence of the child as it was, but misses also the beautiful ideal picture of that which the heart fondly hoped the child might one day be.

THE CRITERION OF USEFULNESS.

It is one of the commonest of mistakes to estimate the influence of a public teacher by the number of his followers. This is to value a plot of ground, for purposes of production, by its length and breadth. Is the *quality* of the ground to be left out of consideration? A small streamlet may move numerous pebbles at its base; but only a mighty river can impel even one big boulder. So that, however vast may be the area of mind over which a public teacher is able to scatter the seeds of his thoughts, we can correctly gauge his power only by estimating the nature of the soil. When we are told of his mighty influence, we should consider what kind of persons he influences, remembering that the minority is, sometimes, greater than the majority.

CHARACTER.

Some people's characters resemble the rays of the sun. They are beautiful even to a chance beholder, though only on analysis do all their lovely hues appear.

SPEECH AND THOUGHT.

It is not to be wondered at that fluency of speech and paucity of thought generally go together. He who has no

definite idea to express, is like the rifleman who fires in the air—there need be no hesitancy: he who *has* a definite idea to express, like the rifleman who aims at the target—there must be deliberation. Or, at least, the former is as he who aims at the target; and the latter as he who aims at the bull's-eye.

MAN'S WORTH.

In one of Montaigne's best-known essays, he says: "As touching the estimate of men, 'tis strange that, ourselves excepted, no other creature is esteemed beyond its proper qualities. We commend a horse for its strength and sureness of foot, and not for his rich caparisons; a greyhound for his share of heels, &c., &c. Why, in like manner, do we not value a man for what is properly his own? He has a great train, a beautiful palace, so much credit, so many thousand pounds a year, and all these are about him, but not in him," &c., &c. To the question which Montaigne here puts, Why no other creature, save man, is esteemed beyond its proper qualities, I think the answer may be stated thus;—because only those qualities give any other creature power: but, in the case of man, riches and rank so augment his influence—for good or for evil—as almost to constitute qualities in themselves.

MUSIC, VOCAL AND INSTRUMENTAL.

No melody is so charming as vocal melody. How divine a thing is the human voice!—divine, indeed, literally, since God made it; whereas the sweetest instrument of music that ever soothed the heart of the sorrowful was, after all, but of man's creation.

GENIUS.

It is a trite observation, but the truth which it contains cannot be too often reiterated, that Perseverance is of more value to a man than Genius without it. Owen Meredith says:—

"Talk not of genius baffled! Genius is master of man!
Genius does what it *must*, and talent does what it *can*."

To which one might pertinently reply, "Yes, but Genius's 'must' will, in the end, be of less avail than Talent's 'may,' if Genius act from impulse, and Talent according to well-arranged and industriously-followed plans."

ECCENTRICITY.

One can always tolerate an eccentric man, if his eccentricity is only natural. But he who pursues eccentricity as an *end*

deserves to be scorned for his toil. It is wise to be like other people, unless, by differing from them, we can be better. Extraordinary ability often induces extraordinary conduct; but extraordinary conduct is no proof of extraordinary ability.

SLANDER.

The principle of supply and demand is not confined to mercantile matters. Patronise not the purveyor of calumny, and, like the vendor of any unmarketable ware, he will soon cease to deal in it.

SINCERITY.

We frequently hear it remarked that a man should not be censured for his erroneous opinions, if only he is conscientious in holding them. But, surely, what is first required is that he should be conscientious in seeing that they are such as ought to be held. Indeed, if they are not, then the greater his sincerity, the worse will it be for society, whom therefore he will be more likely to influence by his pernicious views than he would be if he were less honest in his belief. Error's darts fall powerless, unless they are feathered by sincerity.

EDUCATION.

One of the principal effects of early training is to impart to the mind a distinctive hue, so that ultimately every thought which proceeds from it, like light when it has passed through tinted glass, partakes of the colour of the medium whence it issues. Often the great work of a man's life is to efface from his mind the hue which early training has imparted.

CHARITY.

What passes for charity is, really, in many cases, nothing but indifference. The man who prides himself on his liberal-mindedness is often only one who, caring but little for the principles which he professes, is, of course, not disposed to resent very warmly the action of those who set them at open defiance. But he by whom those principles are really prized is roused by it as by a personal insult. An honest man, therefore, is likely to impugn the convictions of those who think differently from himself, just to the extent that he is sincere in his own convictions. If A believes one thing, and B believes something entirely opposite, A's lenity towards B's views will be in proportion to A's impression that B is probably right; and A's impression that B is probably right will be in proportion to A's impression that he himself is probably wrong. That is not true charity, then, whatever its pretensions, but shallow-

ness of conviction, which quietly tolerates all manner of theories on the most momentous subjects; and that is not bigotry, but a logical necessity, which prompts you to consider him to be in the wrong who holds a totally antagonistic opinion to that which you yourself believe to be the just and proper one. No! charity is not the sacrifice of our entire individuality on the altar of concord; but, while adhering to our own well-matured views, on solemn matters, the granting that our opponent may be equally honest with ourselves; the admitting that his motives may be right, though his opinions be not.—THORNTON WELLS.

The Chief Founders of the Chief Faiths.

Around no men, amongst all the millions of mankind, does so much interest gather as around the Founders of the Chief Religious Faiths of the world. Such men are sometimes almost lost in the obscurity of remote ages, or of the mystery with which they surrounded themselves, or their early followers invested them. But whenever they can be discerned, their characters analysed, and their deeper experiences understood, they are found to be not only leaders and masters of the multitudes who have adopted more or less of their creed and ritual, but also interpreters (more or less partial) of the universal yearnings of the soul of man. Such men may have seemed to sit at the fountains of human thought and feeling, and to have directed or have coloured the mysterious streams, but they have quite as often indicated in their doctrines and in their deeds the strong courses of the thoughts and feeling which are more permanent and deeper than any one man or even any one age could completely discover. The aim of these papers will be, with necessary brevity, to review the chief of such men, noting suggestively rather than exhaustively, their *biography*, their *circumstances*, their *theology*, and their *ethics*. And in concluding the series it is purposed to compare and to contrast each and all of them with the "One Man whom in the long roll of ages we can love without disappointment, and worship without idolatry, the Man Christ Jesus."

PRINCIPAL BOOKS OF REFERENCE.—Max Müller's "History of Ancient Sanskrit Literature," "The Science of Language," "Chips from a German Workshop;" Rev. F. D. Maurice's "Religions of the World;" Archdeacon Hardwick's "Christ and other Masters;" Rev. J. W. Gardner's "Faiths of the World;" Miss Mary Carpenter's "Last Days of Rammohun Roy;" Rev. F. W. Farrar's "Witness of History to Christ;" Rev. A. W. Williamson's "Journey in North China;" Canon Liddon's Bampton Lecture on "Our Lord's Divinity;" Cousin's "History of Modern Philosophy."

No. I.

GAUTAMA BUDDHA.

GAUTAMA BUDDHA stands as the first known founder of a Hindu religion, and up to the present day there is no religion of the world more extensively prevalent, for though banished from India, it has found an adopted home in

Ceylon, Siam, China, the Burman Empire, and in other eastern and some northern regions. Before his time and creed we should have to do mainly with the vast Brahminical system and its derived schools of philosophy. There we should move altogether in the region of myth. For whilst the authors of the Vedic literature remain unknown (a literature more ancient than Zendavesta or Homer), and Brahminism is a religion of those Vedas, it is evident we can know nothing of the founder of that great Faith. Great the Faith assuredly is in its doctrines of man's emanation and reabsorption in the deity. However, in these its cardinal doctrines there were inherent errors, that, with much more in the weird creed, will have to be noted in any attempted review of Buddha and his work. For, as Max Müller says, "the religion of Buddhism is of all religions the most hostile to the old belief of Brahminism, the Buddhists standing to the Brahmins in about the same relation as the early Protestants to the Church of Rome." We proceed, then, in our glance at the founder of this reformed religion, Buddhism, to notice his

BIOGRAPHY.

Gautama Buddha, or, as he is sometimes called, *Buddha Sakya Muni*, probably lived in the sixth century B.C., two centuries before the date of Alexander's expedition, though through the vague chronology of the Brahmins, and the constructed chronologies of the differing creeds of the Chinese and of Ceylonese Buddhists, it is perhaps impossible to fix the period. He was descended from a princely house in one of the more refined provinces of Central India. He was a member of a military caste. The circle of luxuries around him seemed complete, the vista of happiness before him long and bright. But whilst yet a youth the darker aspects of human life fastened his attention, and deeper thoughts than those of a mere pleasure-seeker worked in his brain and heart. Besides a keen sense of sadness at the contemplation of human miseries, an indignant resentment at the intellectual tyranny of the

Brahmin priests overpowered his young soul. Several centuries before, one of the royal caste had to struggle against the exclusiveness of the priests, but found their position impregnable. Now, however, Gautama Buddha dared to challenge the authority of the Brahmins, the gods of the earth (*bhudeva*), and to endeavour by processes of scepticism, that led in many directions to atheism, to free the people from the priestcraft and bibliolatriy of the age and land. But (omitting legends about miracles connected with his childhood) it is recorded that before he felt himself called to that work as liberator and reformer, he had withdrawn from royal surroundings and palace luxuries, and at the age of twenty-nine was spending six years in the society of the Brahmins in study, asceticism, and mendicancy in the great forest of Uruwela. There, in stern conflict with a host of demons, he remained tranquil and unharmed as a star in a storm, and out of that conflict he ascended that very night into experience of spiritual ecstasies in which, among manifold revelations, he understood the sequence of existence, the cause of all sorrow and its cessation. Hence on he claimed the title of Buddha, "the awakened," "the enlightened." There had been many before, some known and many nameless, who had been Buddhas, but he claimed, and his followers grant him, an eminent superiority. He resolved to found a school, preached publicly in Benares, where he spent most of his life; and there, in many parts of Northern India, visiting also Ceylon, he fascinated crowds of followers, and by beauty of life, grace of person, eloquence of utterance, philanthropy and humanity of doctrine and of character, use of the vernacular language, and, according to legend, miraculous powers, he became mighty with a might that has lasted for ages. When he died, at eighty years of age, he was already one of the chief founders of one of the chief Faiths.

CIRCUMSTANCES.

The circumstances into the midst of which this extraordinary man was born, and that surrounded him through his history, help to explain his life and cha-

racter, at which we have already glanced, and to interpret his theological and ethical opinions, which we shall presently note. Such circumstances will be chiefly understood from a knowledge of the then influential religion and philosophy; for there was no nationality, no hero worship, no history to mould the life. The Indian mind chiefly moved and worked in the sphere of religious and metaphysical ideas. The inward life was the problem of surpassing interest to the Indian people. As we have already seen, Brahminism was the prevailing religion of the people. But that assertion can hardly give any definite idea as to the common creed, or the conduct directly or indirectly resulting from the creed, because there has ever been a caprice and a want of fixedness about Hindu mythology that makes it difficult to decide what were the tenants of the Hindu pantheon in any given century, and, consequently, what were the religious rites or bases of morality in such century. Probably, at the epoch of which we are writing, there was a more or less defined worship of the Hindu Triad, namely, Brahma the Creator, Vishnu the Preserver, and Shiva the Destroyer of Forms—which Triad had come forth from the bosom of Brahma, the Supreme Being. These gods were invested with human attributes, and with infra-human tendencies and habits. Under such a system of worship, priestism became a tyranny; for of the three classes—the Brahmins (the religious caste), the Kshatriyas (the military caste), and the Vaisyas (the trading class)—the Brahmin always held much the loftiest social position, and in many ways possessed much the strongest influence. In the direction of mental freedom several philosophies were preparing the way for the work of Gautama Buddha. For the sacerdotalism of the Brahmins, and the creative aptitudes of the Hindu mind, which, overshadowed by superstition, was continually giving birth to new myths, together provoked the thinkers among the people to a widening estrangement from their ancestral religion. So that Kapila, founding the system that he called Sankhya, by which he meant “the rational system” (for it sought to remedy human woes by answering intellectual problems and revealing

"the nature of all that is"), was, by his personal influence and through that of his followers, leading Indian thought in the direction of Buddhism. For, though no separation had yet taken place, and the greatest reformers at the time of Buddha were reforming Brahmins, it has yet been asserted "that from the school of Kapila to that of Buddha the transition is most obvious and direct." Thus it is deeply instructive to note that both in the woes and wrongs belonging to the degraded condition of a priest-ridden and capriciously-superstitious people, and in the philosophic thoughts and sceptical mental tendencies that were being awakened, Gautama Buddha came under a twofold inspiration. For the woes and wrongs of human life appealed with force to the heart of one of whom it is said by St. Hilare, that "his constant heroism equals his convictions, and if the theory that he extols is false, the personal illustrations he gives of it are irreproachable." And at the same time the liberated thoughts and daring problems of the schools of philosophy woke the echoes in the mind of one whose system has been described as "atheism fast merging into idolatry." Though that description needs that we should be reminded, as we are clearly by Max Müller, "that though Buddha had his enemies, he also had his friends and followers, and they likewise were Brahmins and Rishis; some of them accepted his doctrines, not excluding the abolition of caste. Buddhism in its original form was only a modification of Brahminism. It grew up slowly and imperceptibly, and its very founder could hardly have been aware of the final result of his doctrines."

Bristol.

URIJAH R. THOMAS.

(To be continued.)

LOVE—MAN'S CHIEF WISDOM.—

"Nay, man's chief wisdom's love—the love of God.
 The new religion, final, perfect, pure,
 Was that of Christ and love. His great command—
 His all-sufficing precept—was 't not love?
 Truly to love ourselves we must love God—
 To love God we must all His creatures love—
 To love His creatures, both ourselves and Him,
 This love is all that's wise, fair, good, and happy."—*Festus.*

The Preacher's Finger-Post.

**Subject : THE CRY OF THE
SAGE, THE SINNER, AND
THE SAINT.**

"Whither shall I go from thy Spirit ? or whither shall I flee from thy presence ?"—Psalm cxxxix. 7.

Look at this language as used—

I. By the **SAGE**. The philosopher has asked a thousand times, is God everywhere ? Or is there a district or spot in immensity where He is not ? Taking the language as his question, he assumes (1) that He has a "presence," a personal existence : that He is as distinct from the universe as the musician from his music, as the painter from his pictures, as the soul from the body. The language assumes also (2) that His presence is detected as far as his observations extend. He discovers Him far up as the most powerful telescope can reach, and down in the most infinitesimal forms of life : and he concludes that He is present where the eye has never reached, and where the imagination has never travelled. He feels it impossible to assert the limitation ; He who is in every finite thing must be infinite, and He who is Infinite must be everywhere.

First: He cannot flee from His presence in his *reasonings*. All his scientific conclusions are based on principles that imply the all-pervading presence of God. "Laws," "order," "fate," "necessity," what are these, when rigorously analysed, but the volitions of an all-present Mind ?

Secondly: He cannot flee from His presence in his *moral feelings*. When his moral sense is disturbed, when his conscience is excited, he is brought face to face with God. Philosophy says,—God is everywhere. Look at this language as used—

II. By the **SINNER**. In the mouth of the sinner this language means—First: *Thy presence is an evil*. "The everlasting destruction with which the wicked are punished comes from the presence of God and the glory of His power." His presence makes the hell of the damned. The rays of His effulgent purity are the flames in which corrupt spirits burn and writhe.

Secondly: *Escapement from Thy presence is an impossibility*. Would that I could break away from Thee, that

I could elude the flaming glance of Thine eye! I feel in Thy presence as a bird in a cage of adamant all on fire; as I dash against the bars I only bruise and burn myself. I cannot escape from Thee, I can no more flee from Thee than I can from myself. Look at this language as used—

III. By the SAINT. In the mouth of the saint it means I would not if I could. In the impossibility of escape I rejoice; for in "Thy presence there is fulness of joy, and at Thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore."

CONCLUSION. The Omnipresence of God which is a fact to the philosopher, may be either the greatest curse or the greatest blessing to all. To the guilty sinner it is of all evils the most terrible; to the genuine saint it is of all blessings the greatest. A good man in rapture sings—

"I see Thee in the flower: I feel
Thee still

In every breath of air.

I hear Thee in the music of the
rill—

God! Thou art everywhere."

Subject: THE NON-ESSENTIAL
AND THE NECESSARY IN
GENUINE CHRISTIANITY.

"For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature."—Galatians vi. 15.

I. The NON-ESSENTIAL in genuine Christianity. "Nei-

ther circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision." No ritualism is of any avail, Paul would say.

First: Not even the most ancient. Circumcision was one of the most ancient of ceremonies. It began with the father of the Jewish people. It was established as a token of God's special connection with Abraham. There are men in these days who will constantly go into antiquity for authority in doctrine and ceremony, but it "availeth nothing."

Secondly: Not even the most Divine. Although circumcision seems to have been practised by the Egyptians and others, it was Divinely instituted by God in the case of Abraham. A ceremony even of Divine enactment, such as circumcision, baptism, or the Lord's Supper, is not essential.

Thirdly: Not even the most significant. Circumcision was an ordinance to symbolise the separation of the children of Abraham from the world, and their consecration to God; hence the Jews are called the circumcised, and the Gentiles the uncircumcised. Religious rites, however symbolic and expressive of Divine truths, are not essential. I am far enough from expressing unqualified disapproval of symbolism in religion. God teaches men by symbols,—nature is a grand symbol.

All that is here taught is that all rites—even the most ancient, the most Divine, and the most significant—are of minor importance, not worth contending for or opposing. Let the man who approves of ritualism have it, and God bless him! But let him not condemn those who are content to do without it. "Neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision." Indeed, the language may apply to all the *isms* amongst men. Neither Catholicism nor Protestantism, neither Conformity nor Non-conformity, "availeth anything." Spiritual Christianity is independent of all denominationalisms; it is older, greater, sublimer than all. Men have gone to heaven before denominationalisms existed, and will proceed thither when they shall be no more.

II. The NECESSARY in genuine Christianity. "A new creature." Unless a man is a new spiritual creation, it matters not what theology he accepts, what ritualism he observes, what church he attends. Every man who is in Christ Jesus, *i.e.*, who is a genuine Christian, is a new creation. (1.) He has a new life;—new loves, aims, hopes, fears. (2.) He has a new sphere; he is no longer materialistic, but spiritual. Even the material assumes to him spiritual aspects, and is full of spiritual

significance. He walks after the Spirit, not after the flesh. His citizenship is in heaven, he sits down in "the heavenly places of Christ Jesus."

CONCLUSION. This new moral creatureship is genuine Christianity. Unless we are created anew in Christ Jesus unto good works, nothing in heaven or earth will be of any avail to us.

Subject : THE INSCRIPTION ON THE CROSS.

"It was written in Hebrew, Greek, and Latin."—John xix. 20.

The inscription put by Pilate on the head of the Cross of our Blessed Saviour, and the fact that that inscription was written in the three languages, Hebrew, Greek, and Latin, together illustrate—

I. THE UNCONSCIOUS TESTIMONY OF BAD MEN TO TRUTH. Pilate, the vacillating, the superstitious, the cowardly, the cruel, causes a statement to be written about Christ, than which no apostle's argument, no angel's song, could be more truthful. The kingship of the carpenter's son, the royalty of the peasant teacher of Nazareth. Similarly, Balaam and Caiaphas, and they who cavilled at Christ because He received sinners, were all unconsciously testifying to various great truths; *e.g.*, Balaam to the moral fascination of a godly nation,

Caiaphas to the necessity of vicarious sacrifice, the cavillers to the philanthropy and mercy of the Good Shepherd who "came to save the lost."

II. THE FAILURE OF MERE CULTURE TO EFFECT THE HIGHEST ENDS.

These three languages the common, the vagrant, the unlettered could not understand. We find from their record of the events of Calvary, that all the evangelists did not know what each part of the inscription meant. But here we find the possessor of the knowledge of these three languages using the knowledge in the service of the grossest ingratitude, meanest cowardice, and deadliest murder, the world has ever known. It is in view of this principle in the history of nations that Bunsen wrote: "Culture without religion is but civilised barbarianism and disguised animalism." And "Scripture teaches not by might, &c., but by my Spirit."

III. THE OMNISCIENT ARRANGEMENTS OF GOD'S PROVIDENCE.

The fact that these three languages were thus then and there employed, reminds us of the historic marvel that the lifetime of the Incarnate Christ was just the epoch when most naturally Hebrew faith, Greek eloquence, and Latin empire could combine to serve the propagation of

the new Evangel. Surely the Lord came "in the fulness of the times."

IV. THE UNIVERSAL AVAILABILITY OF CALVARY.

The fact that most concerns the population of all centuries and climes is not obscure, metaphysical, or transcendental. No. It was an event that all can understand. A death—and the death of a Man. Its availability is illustrated in its relation to the population of the city then. For it happened not at the distance of a long pilgrimage, but "near the city." And it was explained in three languages, one or other of which all the motley group that passed by could understand. So is it with the spiritual meaning of that fact. "Say not in thy heart, Who shall ascend," &c., "the word is nigh thee," &c.

V. THE WORLD-WIDE VICTORIES OF THE CROSS.

Jerusalem, Athens, Rome, and all of which those several cities were the metropolis, has known, or is gradually knowing, the victory of Christianity. And its wondrous biography, and infallible teaching, and redeeming power, is now proclaimed, not in three but in hundreds of languages, and "every tongue shall confess that Christ is Lord."

URIJAH R. THOMAS.

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Seeds of Sermons from the Minor Prophets.

If the Bible as a whole is inspired, it is of vast importance that all its Divine ideas should be brought to bear upon the living world of men. Though the pulpit is the organ Divinely intended for this work, it has been doing it hitherto in a miserably partial and restricted method. It selects isolated passages, and leaves whole chapters and books for the most part untouched. Its conduct to the Minor Prophets may be taken as a case in point. How seldom are they resorted to for texts, and yet they abound with splendid passages throbbing with Divine ideas. It is our purpose to go through this section of the Holy Word; selecting, however, only such verses in each chapter and book as seem the most suggestive of truths, of the most vital interest, and universal application.

We begin with HOSEA. The remembrance of some facts connected with this man will greatly help us in our endeavours to reach the meaning and feel the power of certain of his utterances. He was a native of Israel, and lived in Samaria about 700 or 800 years B.C. His prophecy seems to have embraced a period of about 60 years, from Jeroboam's death to Hezekiah's ascension to the throne. He was contemporary with Isaiah, and preceded Joel, Jonah, and Amos. His prophecies are directed almost exclusively to the ten tribes who had sunk into the deepest idolatry. His style, as a writer, is very peculiar. "It is," says De Witte, "abrupt, unrounded, and ebullient, his rhythm hard leaping and violent." Like a bee he has been said to fly from one flower to another, to suck the honey from all the blossoms.

HOSEA.

No. XII.

**Subject : AN EARNEST
MINISTRY.**

"Blow ye the cornet in Gibeah, and the trumpet in Ramah : cry aloud at Beth-aven, after thee, O Benjamin."—Hosea v. 8.

The prophet in vision sees Divine judgment coming on the rebellious nation, and commands an alarm to be given of the approach of the enemy. Gibeah (Joshua xviii. 28) and Ramah (xviii. 25) were two elevated places in the tribe of Benjamin, and were well adapted for signals on account of their lofty elevation. The introduction of these particular towns, which did not belong to the tribe of Israel, but to Judah, is intended to indicate that the enemy had

already conquered the ten tribes and had advanced to that on the border of Judah. The idea of the passage is, Give an earnest warning of the judgment about to break on the people, sound the alarm and startle the population. The subject suggested is that of an *earnest ministry*. Notice—

I. The NATURE of an earnest ministry. "Cry aloud." Let the whole soul go forth in the work. Let us not mistake the nature of earnestness. It is not *noise*. Ignorant people imagine that the minister who makes the greatest noise, roars and raves the most in the pulpit, or parades his doings most in journals and reports, is the earnest man. "A celebrated preacher, distinguished for the eloquence of his pulpit preparations, ex-

claimed on his death-bed, 'Speak not to me of my sermons: alas! I was fiddling whilst Rome was burning.'" It is not *frightening* people. Often he who is the most successful by graphic and impassioned descriptions of the judgment day and hell fires, in terrifying men, is considered the most earnest. This is a mistake—a popular and a fatal mistake. It is not *bustle*. He who is always on the "*go*," whose limbs are always on the stretch, into this house and that house, into this meeting and that, who is never at rest, men are always disposed to regard as an earnest man. Genuine earnestness is foreign to all these things. It has nothing in it of the noise and rattle of the fussy brook, it is like the deep stream rolling its current silently, resistlessly, and without pause. An earnest ministry is *living*. It is not mere preaching or service, occasional or even systematic; it is the influence of the whole man. It is the "Word" made flesh; so permeating the whole man that every word, act, and expression are as the blasts of a Divine trumpet, rousing sinners to a sense of their moral danger. Such a ministry is a *matter of necessity*. The Divine thing in the man becomes irrepressible, it breaks out as sunbeams through the clouds: "Woe is unto me if I preach not the Gospel." Such a ministry is *constant*. It is not a professional service: it is as regular as the functions of life, it is a thing that is "in season and out of season," in shops and in sanctuaries, on hearths as well as in pulpits. Such a ministry

is *mighty*. Men can stand before the most thunderous words, and violent attitudinisations, but they cannot stand before such a ministry as this, they are before it as snow before the sun.

"O! let all the soul within you,
For the truth's sake go abroad!
Strike! let every nerve and
sinew
Tell on ages—tell for God."

Notice—

II. The NEED of an earnest ministry. Why was the "cornet" to be now blown in Gibeah, and the "trumpet" in Ramah? Because there was danger. The moral danger to which souls around us are exposed is *great*. There is the danger of losing, not existence, but all that makes existence worth having—love, hope, power, friendship, &c. "To be carnally-minded is death." It is *near*. It is not the danger of an invading army heard in the distance. The enemy has entered the soul and the work of devastating has commenced. It is *increasing*. The condition of the unregenerate soul gets worse and worse every hour.

Brothers! let us be earnest in our work, always "abounding in the work of the Lord"!

"Time is earnest, passing by;
Death is earnest, drawing nigh;
Life is earnest; when 'tis o'er
Thou returnest never more."

Subject: "THE MOTH;" OR,
GOD'S QUIET METHOD OF
DESTROYING.

"Therefore will I be unto Ephraim as a moth, and to the house of Judah as rottenness."—Hosea v. 12.

"And I am like the moth to

im, and like the worm to use of Judah."—*Keil and ch.* "The moth and are figures employed to mt destructive powers: moth destroying clothes l. 9; li. 8; Psalm xxxix. he worm injuring both and flesh."

words indicate *God's quiet of ruining.* In two or verses in this chapter He ken of as proceeding in ork of destruction as a I will be unto Ephraim m." Here as a "moth"—g out ruin silently, slowly gradually,

e works decay thus some- in the BODIES of men. imes men die violently addenly, but more fre- y by some insidious hid- ease which, like a "moth," away quietly at the vitals, ally poisoning the blood dermining the constitu-

In truth, the seed of like a moth, gnaws away fter day and year after in every human frame. oth is often so small and in its workings that medi- ence can seldom find it and when it finds it out, it may check it for a t cannot destroy it: the defies all medicine. Truly crushed by a moth. At art of some of the strong- es in the forest there are of invisible insects noise- at work; the forester it not, the tree seems y; until one fine morn- fore a strong gust of t falls a victim to these workers. So with the st man amongst us.

He works decay thus

sometimes in the ENTERPRISES of men. Often men find it im- possible to succeed in their worldly avocations. Mercan- tile establishments that have been prosperous for generations have the "moth" in them. For years the fabric has been so firm that it has made but little way, the tree has grown and flourished though the worm was at the root; but the time comes when the effects are seen, and the existing proprietors begin to wonder they do not go on as usual, why the fruit is not so juicy and abundant as in their father's time. One of their projects brings poor results and another fails, at last the estab- lishment collapses; the out- siders wonder, and a panic is created in the market. What is the matter? There has been a "moth" there for years. It has not been conducted by godly men and that in a right spirit; so God sent a "moth," and the moth has been working away for years silently, secretly, and gradually, until all the vitality has been eaten up.

III. He works decay thus sometimes in the KINGDOMS of men. For a time a country flourishes: there is a vigour, an elasticity, an enterprise, a love of justice and honour in the spirit of the people, and all things seem to prosper. Its commerce flourishes, its laws are respected, its influence great amongst the nations, but there is a "moth" in its heart. Effemi- nacy, luxury, ambition, greed, self-indulgence, servility, ir- reverence, these are moths, and decay sets in, and it falls not by the sword of the invader but by its own "rotteness." We

fear there is a "moth" secretly but regularly working out the ruin of England. "I will be unto Ephraim as a moth." It was thus with the nations of antiquity. Where are they? The moth has eaten them.

"When nations go astray from age to age,
The effects remain a fatal heritage;
Bear witness, Egypt, thy huge monuments
Of priestly fraud and tyranny austere!
Bear witness thou, whose only name presents
All holy feelings to religion dear—
In earth's dark circle once the precious gem
Of living light, O fallen Jerusalem!"

Robert Southey.

IV. He works decay thus sometimes in the CHURCHES of men. What destroyed the Churches of Asia Minor? The "moth" of worldliness and religious errors. Some of our modern churches are obviously slowly rotting away. A realising faith in the invisible, brotherly love, practical self-sacrifice, Christliness of spirit—these, which constitute the moral heart of the true Church, are being eaten up by the moth of secularity, sectarianism, superstition, and religious pretence. Thus, too, individual souls lose their spiritual life and strength. Many a soul once earnestly alive to the higher things of being, has lost its vigour and fallen into spiritual decay. God deliver us from those errors of heart that like a moth eat away the life! "We read," says Archbishop Trench, "in books about the

West Indies of a huge bat, which goes under the ugly name of the vampire bat. It has obtained this name, sucking as it does the blood of sleepers, even as the vampire is fabled to do. So far, indeed, there can be no doubt; but it is further reported, whether truly or not I will not undertake to say, to fan them with its mighty wings, that so they may not wake from their slumbers, but may be hushed into deeper sleep, while it is thus draining away the blood from their veins. Sin has often presented itself to me as such a vampire bat, possessing as it does the same fearful power to lull its victims into an even deeper slumber, to deceive those whom it is also destroying."

Subject: WRONG METHODS OF RELIEF.

"When Ephraim saw his sickness, and Judah saw his wound, then went Ephraim to the Assyrian, and sent to King Jareb: yet could he not heal you, nor cure you of your wound."—Hosea v. 13.

The "moth" had so far eaten into the political heart of Ephraim and Judah that they began to feel the wound, and to grow conscious of their weakness. They felt, it may be, that from the sole of the foot to the crown of the head there was no soundness in them, but wounds and bruises and putrified sores. Under a grievous sense of their disease and weakness, instead of applying to Jehovah for help they went "to the Assyrian, and sent to King Jareb." The Assyrian king was ever ready for his own aggrandisement to mix

himself up with the affairs of neighbouring States, and profess to undertake Israel and Judah's cause. As the real disease of the two kingdoms was apostacy to the Lord, which ever gives rise to all the evils that destroy political States as well as individual souls, we are justified in giving the text a spiritual application : and we raise from it the following remarks :

I. Men are OFTEN MADE CONSCIOUS of their spiritual malady. Depravity is a disease of the heart ; it is often represented as such in the Bible, and it is so. As a disease it impairs the energies, mars the enjoyments of the soul, and incapacitates it for the right discharge of the duties of life. Often men remain insensible to this disease, but the time comes when they become deeply conscious of it. As " Ephraim saw his sickness, and Judah his wounds," they see their moral wretchedness, and cry out, " Who shall deliver us from the bondage of this sin and death ? " A great point is gained when the sinner becomes conscious of his sins.

II. Men under a consciousness of their spiritual malady FREQUENTLY RESORT TO WRONG MEANS OF RELIEF. Ephraim now " went to the Assyrian, and sent to King Jareb." The Assyrians had neither the power nor the disposition to effect their restoration to political health. How often men whose consciences are touched by the events of Providence and the truths of the Gospel, appeal for help to some moral Assyrian ! Sometimes they go to *scenes of carnal amusement* ; sometimes

to *sceptical philosophisings* ; sometimes to *false religions*. These are all " miserable comforters," " broken cisterns."

III. That resorting to wrong methods of relief WILL PROVE UTTERLY INEFFECTIVE. " Yet could he not heal you, nor cure you of your wound." What can worldly amusements, sceptical reasonings, and false religions do towards healing a sin-sick soul ? Nothing. Like anodyne, they may deaden the pain for a minute only, that the anguish may return with intenser acuteness. There is but one Physician, and that is Christ. Public amusers, sceptical philosophers, entertaining novelists, ceremonial priests—these have been tried a thousand times, and have failed—signally failed. Christ only can bind up the broken-hearted. " Come unto me, all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

Subject: MAN'S HIGHEST SOCIAL ACTION.

" Come, and let us return unto the Lord : for he hath torn, and he will heal us : he hath smitten, and he will bind us up."—Hosea vi. 1.

These words are to be regarded as an address by the prophet, in the name of the Lord, to those who had been smitten or sent into exile. They mean : let us go no more to the Assyrians nor to any other incapable deliverer, but " let us return unto the Lord ; " put away all confidence in an arm of flesh, renounce all idolatries.

Take the words as indicating *man's highest social action*. Man, as a member of society, has

much to do with his fellow-men; he should contribute to the advancement of general knowledge, to the progress of political purity and freedom, and to the augmentation of the general health and comfort of the kingdom. But there is a higher work than this for him in society: it is that of *stimulating* the community to which he belongs "to return unto the Lord," to bring them into fellowship with the Infinite Father. "Come, and let us return unto the Lord." Taking the words in this application, what do they imply?

I. That society is **AWAY FROM GOD**. Not *locally*, of course: for the Great Spirit is with all and in all, but *morally*. Society is away from Him in its *thoughts*; it practically ignores His existence and His claims. Away from Him in its *sympathies*: its heart is on those things that are repugnant to His holy nature. Away from Him in its *pursuits*: its pursuits are those of selfish and carnal gratifications and aggrandisements. Far gone, in truth, is society from its true centre—God. It is like the prodigal in a "far country." The words imply—

II. That estrangement from God is the **SOURCE OF ALL ITS TRIALS**. Because the prodigal left his father's home he got reduced to the utmost infamy and wretchedness. Moral separation from God is ruin. Cut the branch from the root and it withers; the river from its

source, and it dries up; the planet from the sun, and it rushes into ruin. Society has left God—its root, source, centre, hence the terrible evil with which He by His government "hath torn" it.

Nothing will remove the evils under which society is groaning but a return unto God. Legislation, commerce, science, literature, art, none of these will help it much so long as it continues away from Him. The words imply—

III. That **RETURN TO HIM IS A POSSIBLE WORK**. Were it not so there would be no meaning in the language, "Come, and let us return unto the Lord." With some estranged spirits in the universe a return may be impossible for ever: not so with human spirits on this earth. There is a way, a true and living way, by which all may return: return by repentance towards God, and faith in our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. "God is in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself."

CONCLUSION. Who are the greatest social benefactors? Those who are the most successful in exciting and stimulating their fellow-men to come back to God, to return home to the Great Father of love Who awaits their return. He says, "Come now, let us reason together," &c. To bring society back to God is pre-eminently the work of the gospel minister, to this he consecrates his power, his time, his all.

The Pulpit and its Handmaids.

ORIGINAL SIMILITUDES.

THE MORAL UPAS.—"In man's earthly sphere of life, furnished as it is like a paradise, with the choicest fruit-trees, there is *one* tree that will produce death, and but one—and that is, disobedience to the Divine command."

SOULS REQUIRE VARIETY.—"The smallest flower that grows in your garden cannot feed upon any one element. It requires sun and air, soil and shower, and all the various gases of the world must lend their aid. And can the soul feed upon a few dogmas? No; nor need it. Christianity has provided a boundless variety."

GENTLE INFLUENCES.—"It is not the thunder and the lightning that clothe the fields with the verdure and beauty of life; but the noiseless dewdrop and the quiet sunbeam. Neither the thunders of civil law, nor the fulminations of a heartless declaimer, can touch the soul. Nothing can travel to her seat but the gentle message of the truth in love."

THEOLOGY OF THE GOSPEL.—"The theology you get directly from the Gospel is, as compared with that you get from human books, like the flowers scattered over the landscape, delighting all with their beauty and their fragrance, compared to the *hor-tus siccus* of the botanist; like the translucent river starting

from unknown heights and winding its way towards the ocean, touching into life the scenery through which it passes, compared to the little stagnant pool, muddy, and generating the elements of disease."

THE FECUNDITY OF TRUTH.—"As from the acorn you might evolve forests, so from one sentence in God's word you might elaborate volumes of theological thought."

TRUE SELF-SERVICE.—"As planets serve themselves and each other by waiting on the central orb, intelligent creatures can only truly serve themselves and others by waiting on the living God."

THE SOUL'S EYE.—"Spiritual love is the eye of the soul, and though the sun of external revelation throws its radiance about it, if it has not love, the whole field of truth will be hid in densest obscurity. Our native sympathy with the right, the good, and the Divine, must be awakened if we would know the things that are of God."

NOISE IS NOT POWER.—"It is the little shallow stream that you hear rattling among the hills. The deep rivers roll on in majestic calmness. It is not the exciting flash of lightning that melts the snowy mountains and clothes the earth with verdure—it is the gentle sunbeam. It is the little lamp kindled by

man that flickers in every wind: the stars lit up by God burn steadily and brightly amidst the fiercest hurricane."

SENSE OF DEPENDENCE.—"As the ivy twines around the oak, the human affections twine around some outward thing or being. Every man's soul has an object of chief love and reliance."

"THE SOUL is a vineyard laid waste, a temple in ruins, an empire in anarchy, a world in chaos."

GOD'S WORDS.—"Human words are often either masks to conceal, or false witnesses to misrepresent, the mind. But God's words, whether written on matter or mind, in the forms and laws of life, or in literary characters, are always the faithful exponents of His own great soul."

NATURE.—"This earth, with its encircling firmament of orbs and systems, should not be regarded merely as a storehouse of provisions, to supply animal wants and gratify animal sensibilities, nor merely as a realm for scientific experiment and poetic revelry; but as an organ of Divine thought and feeling to the human soul. It is the voice of God to the human heart, a Divine appeal to the human conscience. Nature has a moral meaning, God's word is in it."

TIME.—"Time, like a fire, is constantly burning up the heavens and the earth that constitute our little world. One star of promise after another fades from our horizon. One flower after another withers from our landscape. We are fast losing our hold upon this world. To the poor emigrant who leaves for ever his native land, the shores, the cliffs, and

the varied sceneries of his own country seem to be moving off from him as he rolls on his watery path; but, in reality, it is he that is leaving them. The illusion matters not. It is practically the same. It is so with life; we are sailing further and further from our interest in the material every day. And this is the same so far as we are concerned, as if the world was leaving us. Let us then cultivate a vital connection with the imperishable."

NATURE AND THE SOUL.—"No one can see God's beauty in the external world who has not moral beauty within; no one can catch the sweet harmonies without, who has not the moral harmonies within. The soul is the measure and mirror of man's universe."

GOD AND THE SOUL.—"An intelligent spirit apart from communication with God is a globe without a sun, dark, cold, chaotic, dead. You may as soon think of cultivating the earth without rays from the central orb, as to think of educating the human soul without ideas from the Everlasting. Apart from God the soul is a star that has lost its centre, and wandering from its orbit, going every moment into deeper darkness, and hastening to ultimate destruction. The work of Christ is to arrest that wandering orb, bring it back to its sphere, link it to its Divine centre, and cause it through all its future to catch and reflect the influences of eternal truth, rectitude, and bliss."

BOOKS.—"A true book is a second incarnation of man's self; in it, as in a second body, he lives

and works long after his mortal frame has crumbled to ashes."

INFLUENCE.—"None of us can live unto ourselves. In every act we produce a ripple

upon the great sea of existence that shall go on in ever-widening circles. Every moment we touch chords that shall send their vibrations through the ages."

Homiletical Breviaries.

No. LIV.

Subject: THE CHURCH, OR THE CHRISTLY COMMUNITY.

"Paul, and Silvanus, and Timotheus, unto the church of the Thessalonians which is in God the Father and in the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ."
—1 Thess. i. 1.

Certain words which once stood for the purest and divinest things represent in this age much that is false and corrupt. Such, for example, is the word *Christian*. Many bad journals, institutions, people, are now called *Christian*. Such also is the word *church*; once it represented a *Christly community of men*, now it frequently represents an assemblage of worldlings, sectarians, and bigots. The Church in the text I take in its original meaning, a *Christly community of men*. Such a Church existed in Thessalonica as well as in other places in the days of the Apostle, such a Church has existed in all ages, and such a Church is existing still. Its members are found in connection with all conventional churches, and sometimes not found in any. The text suggests two remarks concerning this *Christly community*. I. It ENJOYS THE HIGHEST MODE OF SPIRITUAL EXISTENCE. It is "in God the Father" and "in the Lord Jesus Christ." The meaning is, it lives in the *Divine* and the eternal, and that in some special way. First: It lives in the *Divine heart*. As loved children live in the heart of loving parents, all good men live in the heart of God and His Christ. He thinks, plans, and works for them. Secondly: It lives in the *Divine character*. All men live in the character of others. The character of the last generation is the atmosphere in which the present generation lives. As the loving child lives in the character of his parents, the loving pupil in the character of his master, the reader in his favourite author, so this *Christly community* inbreathes the ideas and imbibes the spirit of the *Divine*.

II. IT HAS THE BEST WISHES OF THE BEST MEN. "Paul, Silvanus, Timotheus." The New Testament shows us that these were choice sons of God. What did these best men wish for the Christly community at Thessalonica? (1) Divine "grace." What does this mean? The special favour and the choicest benediction of Almighty love; it involves all good. (2) "Peace." "Peace from our Lord and Father Jesus Christ." What a blessed thing is peace! Peace with self—universe—God.

No. LV.

Subject: THE GRAND REWARD ANTICIPATED BY A GENUINE GOSPEL MINISTER.

"For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming?"—1 Thess. ii. 19.

A better reading of these words would be, "For what is our hope or joy or crown of glorying, or are not ye also before our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming?" It is natural for men to work for rewards, to have an eye in all their labours and toils to compensatory results. There is a selfish and a disinterested aim after rewards. The selfish is not only seen in the mere worldling whose rewards are confined to the present life, but also in the religious professor, who here works, sacrifices, and prays, in order to get for himself a blessed heaven at last. The disinterested reference to rewards is peculiar to the genuinely Christly worker, it is exemplified in the text: "What is our hope?" &c. Notice: I. THE NATURE OF THE GOOD WHICH HE REGARDED AS A REWARD FOR HIS LABOURS. It was not wealth or enjoyment on earth, nor his own heaven in the future; but the *spiritual* excellence of those for whom he laboured; the deliverance of them from all kinds of moral evil, and their restoration to the image of God—he sought nothing higher as a recompense. This was his highest "hope;" he anticipated nothing higher. This was his "joy;" nothing thrilled him with a higher delight than to see sin and falsehood crushed, and virtue made triumphant. This was his "crown of rejoicing" (or, as in margin, crown of glorying). The pleasure which the victor in the Grecian games felt in the garland he had won, and which encircled his brow, was nothing compared to the holy triumph and ecstasy Paul experienced when he had won a soul to holiness and to God. Notice: II. THE PERIOD WHEN THIS

GOOD WOULD BE MANIFESTED TO HIS ADMIRING EYES. "Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming?" This implies two things. (1) His belief in the final advent of Christ. Paul never doubted this, nor did the early disciples. They were not inspired as to its specific time; hence they mistook and thought it just at hand. (2) His belief that at that period he should meet and recognise all his converts. They would all be there, and he would know them and they him. And as they would be presented to the Great Head "without spot or wrinkle or any such thing," he would experience the highest transport of joy.

No. LVI.

Subject: THE ACTION OF THE MEMORY IN PAIN.

"Jerusalem remembered in the days of her affliction and of her miseries all her pleasant things that she had in the days of old."—Lam. i. 7.

Memory is one of the most remarkable faculties of the human mind, it is that within a man which retains all the impressions made upon his senses, his conscience, and his heart. It allows nothing to be lost, and in its own times and ways reproduces all. It links him indissolubly to the past. The words lead us to look at the action of memory in pain. I. It GENERALLY REFERS TO THE "PLEASANT THINGS" OF THE PAST. This it does by a necessary law of its nature—the law of contrast. Jerusalem now in thralldom and distress remembered the bright days of its liberty and joy. "We wept when we remembered Zion." (1) Life has its "*pleasant things*." Perhaps there is no man, the greatest sufferer on earth, but who has had some "pleasant things" in his history: some flowers on his dreary road, met with some sparkling fountains on his desert path. Most men have more of the pleasant than the painful. (2) Life has its *painful things*. All men must meet with trials sooner or later—physical, social, moral, &c. Now in the painful memory reverts to the pleasant. It is ever so. Men under the infirmities of age revert to the bright joys of youthhood; the rich man who has sunk into bankruptcy reverts to the days when he had more than heart could wish; souls in perdition recall the sunny day of grace. In relation to the action of the memory in pain we go on to remark—II. That its reference to the "*pleasant things*" of the past ALWAYS INTENSIFIES THE SUF-

FERINGS OF THE SUFFERER. The wretchedness of Jerusalem was made more wretched by remembering great blessings once enjoyed. There are two things that tend to this: (1) The consciousness that the "pleasant things" are *irrevocably lost*. The innocence of childhood, the glowing hopes of youth, the pleasures of mature manhood, sacred impressions made upon the young heart by books, sermons, and parental piety,—these can never be regained. (2) The consciousness that the "pleasant things" have been *morally abused*. This makes the action of memory in hell so overwhelmingly painful. "Son, remember," &c., &c. Memory involves *receptivity—retention—reproduction*.

No. LVII.

Subject: THE PERFECT SERVICE.

"Ye serve the Lord Christ."—Colossians iii. 24.

It would be truthful to say "all serve the Lord Christ"—some *against* their will, *e.g.*, Pharisees, Pilate, Judas, the soldiers; some *unconsciously*—all who spread the true refinement of art, the researches of science, the charities of philanthropy. But Paul is not now speaking to such, but "to the saints and faithful brethren at Colosse." And these words indicate about the life service of all true Christians. I. ITS MOTIVE. The constraint is "for Christ's sake." Such motive is (1) *deep enough*. It has its hands on the hidden springs of purpose and love. (2) *Abiding enough*. To please others who may change or die, or to please self, which is fickle and disappointing, cannot ensure the prolonged service men can render the Eternal and the Unchanging Christ. II. ITS PATTERN. In some warfare the commander says, "Go;" in this He says, "Follow me." "He was in all points tempted," &c. "He has left us an example," &c. III. ITS HELP. The fishers after their night of bootless toil, Peter seeking to walk on the waves, Paul receiving grace to endure an unknown and hidden sorrow, are specimens of men needing and even receiving help from Christ. IV. ITS COMPREHENSIVENESS. It includes all circumstances, whether of artisan or statesman; all ages, whether of child or patriarch; of all spheres, whether of hidden or outward life. "Whatsoever ye do," &c. V. ITS CONSUMMATION. It has now the approval of conscience, and will have the clear and soul-satisfying "well done" of the Great Taskmaster.

Bristol.

URIAH R. THOMAS.

Literary Notices.

[We hold it to be the duty of an Editor either to give an early notice of the books sent to him for remark, or to return them at once to the Publisher. It is unjust to praise worthless books; it is robbery to retain unnoticed ones.]

THE REVIEWER'S CANON.

In every work regard the author's end,
Since none can compass more than they intend.

SERMONS PREACHED FOR THE MOST PART IN IRELAND. By RICHARD CHENEVIX TRENCH, D.D., Archbishop of Dublin. London: Macmillan and Co.

WE are right glad to receive this volume from the pen of Archbishop Trench, who has done so much for Biblical scholarship and homiletic exposition. His works on the parables and miracles of our Lord have a pre-eminent position in most theological libraries, and from that position they are not likely soon to be displaced. He is always clear as crystal, and penetrating as the light. As a mere sermoniser we should not recommend his sermons, so far as suggestiveness of method or stirring rhetoric are concerned, but for clear exposition, deep and sacred thought, calm and stately style, he has no rival, and but few equals. This volume contains thirty-two sermons, the subjects of which are:—"Jacob a Prince with God and with Man; Agrippa; The Woman that was a Sinner; Secret Faults; The Seven Worse Spirits; Freedom in the Truth; Joseph and his Brethren; Bearing One Another's Burdens; Christ's Challenge to the World; The Love of Money; The Salt of the Earth; The Armour of God; Light in the Lord; The Jailer of Philippi; The Thorn in the Flesh; Isaiah's Vision; Selfishness; Abraham interceding for Sodom; Vain Thoughts; Pontius Pilate; The Brazen Serpent; The Death and Burial of Moses; A Word from the Cross; The Church's Worship in the Beauty of Holiness; Every Good Gift from Above; On the Hearing of Prayer; The Kingdom which cometh not with Observation; Pressing toward the Mark; Saul; The Good Shepherd; The Valley of Dry Bones; All Saints." It will be seen that all these subjects are of primary importance; and although many of the texts have been frequently preached from, the reader will find that the accomplished author has struck out a new light from many a commonplace passage.

A HANDBOOK OF REVEALED THEOLOGY. By Rev. JOHN STOCK, LL.D. With a Prefatory Recommendation by the Rev. C. H. SPURGEON. London: Elliot Stock, 62, Paternoster Row.

ASSUMING the theology of Calvin and the ritualism of the Baptist to be all-important, we do not know of a more zealous, and, we may add, able,

expounder and defender of either than Dr. Stock. Those who reject both, and repudiate all theological systems and fleshly observances in connection with that Gospel which is "spirit" and "life," would do well to read this book for many reasons. It is the production of a mind of singular theological zeal, much sacred learning, great vigour and reach of thought. Contact with a mind of this order is one of the best conditions of spiritual quickening and culture. Strong as he is in his own beliefs, he does not damn heretics; he deals not only humanely, but with high Christian charity, with all his opponents. Then, too, the book abounds with good methods for the distribution of thoughts, and many suggestive and striking expositions of sacred Scripture. We do not wonder that a work of this high order has reached a third edition, and we shall hail the intelligence that it has reached as many more.

SERMONS PREACHED IN TRINITY CHURCH, GLASGOW. By WILLIAM PULSFORD, D.D. Glasgow: James Maclehose, St. Vincent Street.

THIS volume consists of thirteen sermons, the subjects of which are:—"The Riches and Poverty of Christ; The Captivity of Thought; Looking up and Lifting up; The House of God and the Way to it; All Things Work together for Good; Christ on the Cross; The Perfect Law of Liberty; Man's Refuge; Death an Appointment; The Absolute Character and Critical Effects of the Ministry of the Gospel; The Open and Shut Door; Thinking, Feeling, and Working; and The Ascension of Christ." These are the sermons of a man who evidently thinks for himself—thinks deeply and devoutly; and there is not a commonplace expression from beginning to end; and although there hangs a haziness over some sections, much is lighted up with spring-tide beams. The conventionally evangelic man, who is constantly calling out for the "simple Gospel," will open this volume, glance at a page, throw it by, and say there is no Christ in it. A man of this miserable type—a deacon of an Independent church in one of the large towns in the North of England—came not long since to hear us preach, and, on leaving the church, said to one of our friends that "the preacher had not pronounced the word Christ in all his sermon." The reply of our friend was, "that the word Christ was not in the whole chapter of the New Testament from which the text was taken, but nevertheless that it was full of Christ, and so was the sermon." And in truth it was—Christ's ideas and spirit happened to inspire us greatly on that morning. These wretched souls can only see Christ in the word Christ, although Christ fills the Bible and the universe. The most unchristly sermons that come into our hands for review are those where the word Christ bristles on every page. The sermons in the volume before us are full of Christ, though the word Christ does not frequently appear. No one can read these sermons thoughtfully—and they require thought—without receiving an impulse for higher thoughts, loftier aspirations, and a diviner life.



Sermonic Kernels by the Illustrious Schleiermacher.

V.

[Dr. F. Schleiermacher (1768-1834), Professor of Theology at the University of Berlin and minister of Trinity Church in the same city, was highly distinguished in both capacities. He was characterised alike by moral and intellectual greatness, and stands prominently forward among those whom Germans delight to honour, as instrumental in reviving the moral and religious life of the Fatherland at the beginning of the present century. His sermons (ten vols.) are regarded as among the fairest flowers of German pulpit eloquence. His chief theological work is entitled "The Christian Faith (*Der christliche Glaube*).]

DUTIES WE HAVE TO DISCHARGE TOWARD THOSE WHO OBSERVE OUR CONDUCT.

OUR associate human life, as Providence has prepared it for us, demands many visible sacrifices. Every day we are called upon to restrict our worldly possessions, to refrain from various pursuits, to undertake various tasks, and to resign much that is acknowledged to be our own, for the sake of others; and religion requires us to do all this with a willing heart. Such a readiness to surrender, and to communicate was, indeed, reckoned among the peculiar excellences of the

early Christians. But they were equally well known for their absolute refusal to yield certain other sacrifices,—such, namely, as respect for a higher than the earthly good for which man is indebted to society. And so they braved every slander and every earthly loss rather than incur the disgrace of being unfaithful to conscience or of denying the truth from regard to man. It is complained, and perhaps not without reason, that this readiness to serve has declined among us, and that men are everywhere regarding their own interests more than is consistent with the teaching of the Redeemer: why is it not complained that this steadfastness is more rare, and apparently in less esteem? It is, alas, only too true! How few there are, who for the sake of conviction and conscience would suffer even slight losses, or merely passing unpleasantnesses! Many who treat him who thinks it natural and in order to give up something of his own advantage for the good of others, as a good-natured fool, in the same manner regard him who will not purchase the approval of men with a portion of his own approval, as a good-natured fanatic. And if he is outspoken and bold in asserting his convictions, even when these are opposed to the prejudices of the majority: then he is reproached for his insolence in forgetting the respect due to public opinion. As a duty has been discovered of caring for oneself in earthly matters, in order to abridge at will one's duty to the community: so a duty has been devised of neglecting and surrendering oneself in moral and spiritual matters, that courage may be dispensed with, and the most advantageous course chosen. Many fine things are said of self-conceit, of modesty, of human fallibility, and of openness of mind, by way of justifying such conduct; and there may be much plausibility and much seeming agreement with the precepts of religion in them. But when once this compliance has been yielded, where is it to cease? and where is per-

sistent fidelity to ourselves to begin? It is of the highest importance for us to *know* whether or not we are to act differently, because we are observed and judged by men of different opinions from our own. I know of no rule but this word of Christ: "No man can serve two masters." If thou wilt satisfy thy conscience, thou canst not at the same time also satisfy the world. He who makes this his starting-point, as every Christian must, that nothing but the exact performance of a known duty is acceptable to God; that "whatsoever is not of faith is sin:" is not free to imagine, that when regarded from a different standpoint, the matter in hand may require another duty in violation of the former. That men, as the witnesses and judges of our actions, may demand something of us, I admit; but this comes of its own accord, if only we are true to our consciences. This must be so, since all God's demands upon us must consist with and support one another. Let us now ponder this matter, and may it conduce to our establishment in that which is good.

"Be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you" (1 Pet. iii. 15).

The application of these words to our subject is obvious. In the primitive times of Christianity genuine honesty, brotherly love, indifference to earthly things; in short, whatever pertains to a worship of God in the Spirit, were strange and rare; and he who saw another acting according to these sentiments, would necessarily wonder what his motives could be, to lead him so entirely aside from the beaten path. And thus the Christians became the object of special attention and criticism. In our day, however, we are everywhere surrounded by men who know the doctrines and requirements of Christianity; so that in general no inquiry after the reason of our conduct is needed, and as to those who are at the furthest remove

from religion, it but rarely happens that they are candid enough to inquire. But in particular, men think only too variously, as to what is in harmony with the laws of faith and of Christian integrity; and therefore they must often consider, how the separate sentiments and actions of a man harmonise with his generally professed principles. Now the Apostle here teaches us, *what we owe to this attention of men, which is directed upon us.* We are to "be ready to give an answer," &c. This precept contains *everything* which can be demanded of us: for if the right of men to observe and judge our actions could impose upon us any other duty than this, then it could not impose upon us this duty. It is this that I wished to convince you of.

I. We are to be ready to give an answer to everyone, otherwise the best of what is intended to be gained by the associate life of men is lost, namely, the fuller knowledge of the image of God, and the clearer view and better attainment of the goal of human excellence. This is the chief purpose of the existence of human society. Therefore everyone has the right to observe and judge others, and to inquire into the reason of their actions; and it is the twofold duty of everyone so to order his whole life, *that he may be able to give an account of it, and also that he may be ready to give this answer to everyone of his brethren.*

First, then, we are to be able to give an account of everything that we do. Reflection, consideration, reverence for the laws to which man is subject, are intended to be at the basis of all our actions; this is here presented to us as our duty toward those whom God has placed near us as witnesses and observers of our life. If you wish not to sin against your brethren in this respect, *never act from regard to the mere authority or the example of others,* however good it may be acknowledged to be. For if

you do act in this manner, your reason for your act is in reality no reason, and there is no connection between such a reason and your other qualities and sentiments. Your act is but the copy of another man's, and you can only reply, that it is doing amiss to observe your conduct, as it can be no object upon which to exercise reflection and judgment. So then you are unworthy of a place in the community, and men have cause to complain of you, as a changing shadow, a deceptive appearance, instead of being a man with a peculiar law and type of his actions within himself; and so it were better for men that you should give place to another. *Again*, if you wish not to fall into sin, *never act from mere custom*. There can be nothing good, nothing instructive, in an involuntary, thoughtless repetition; it is nothing but the echo, the continuation of a movement in which you were once set. And also this first impulse to which you would refer the inquiry into the reason of your conduct, was unworthy of you: for it is only a thoughtless act that can give rise to a habit. He who is ever guided in his actions by the clear perception of his moral relations and of his place in the world, will never repeat an act without thought. Supposing that every man has a free inner life, we wish also to see in every act of a man the expression of his inner being, and to find in this expression the necessary reason why that life should shape itself in precisely this manner; and we rightly complain of him who deceives this most just expectation, and declare him to be unworthy of his place among us. But for this same reason also *your actions must never be the result of sudden and disorderly emotions*. A strong feeling is something grand and very attractive to men. But their attention is satisfied only when reason accords with and accompanies the feeling. And we rightly presuppose this harmony in every one,

since we regard every action as the product of the combined activity of all the powers of the man, and every man as a free agent. But if you, in answer to the inquiry as to what has guided you in your actions, can only reply that your mind was in such a state that you were unable from the vehemence of your feeling to act otherwise: this is no account of them; we learn merely, that you are subject to the power of blind impulse, and may well wish to see a more rational being in your place.

These are the faults by which we justly offend those who consider our life worthy of their attention, and which we must carefully avoid, if we would give them proof of our esteem. And this genuine proof of our esteem, so far from restricting our fidelity to ourselves, spontaneously arises from our whole conduct, when we do nothing but that which conscience, even apart from this regard to others, immediately requires of us. This will appear, as we consider,

Secondly, that *we are to be ready and willing*, when required, *to give the account* which we are able to give. Even without a very complicated life-work, enough instances will occur, in which you will have, indeed, remained true to yourself and your principles, but in which others will think they find inconsistency. Rejoice as soon as they express the least wish to understand you aright; rejoice, that they set so much by the knowledge of a firm and pious mind, and gladly come to their help with any explanations you can give. In the fulfilment of this precious duty let neither pride nor false shame hinder you. If in cold reserve you refuse to take away the veil, or perhaps even wish designedly to hide yet more the reasons of your conduct, then your deeds, your previous thoughts, your internal struggles, all those efforts of yours the knowledge of which might

be so salutary to others, are as useless to them as if you had acted without reflection. Say not that this is a matter almost always of explaining thoughts and sentiments, whose fairest adornment is their secrecy. This is a useless precaution and a false modesty for a Christian, who in humility of heart ascribes all that is good in him to the grace of God. And all that is good in a human heart is intended to be revealed for the promotion of the work of salvation in others. Say not, too, that precisely where men demand an answer for our conduct, circumstances and relations are concerned, usually, which cannot be revealed to them. For the precept in our text requires that your life shall have no mysteries. The necessary and wholesome fellowship of men is not to be interrupted and spoilt by such things. You are to let your light shine, not only in a corner of your heart, but before the world, wherever you are. And this, without regard to those who observe and judge us, is in itself very wise counsel. For almost all secrets proceed from selfish wishes, and lead to complications, anxiety, contradiction in our engagements, vain subterfuges, deceitful words. It is enough that we cannot always avoid being burdened with the secrets of others ; for ourselves we will as much as possible strive to have none, and so we shall have nothing to hinder us in giving an account of our conduct to everyone who desires it.

II. Let us now examine *whether anything else is incumbent upon us in the same direction.* An unprejudiced mind will hardly comprehend what else there can be to seek and to do in this matter ; but by everyday experience we find the opinion very widespread, that we must also do somewhat, in order to spare the observers of our mode of life various unpleasant feelings, and to enable them to speak of us with approval and satisfaction.

But every effort of this description must, in the first place, *violate our conscience*. If it is to be a question only of the unpleasant feelings which good men have at the sight of sin, and of the gaining of their approbation by integrity ; then, indeed, nothing new and special needs to be done to this end. But to the vicious who are about us the sight of virtue is unpleasant ; are we, in order to content these, to adopt the semblance of vice ? But, you will say, we have not now to do with these, but merely with the prejudices and special opinions of well-disposed but narrow-minded men, and of a certain forbearance which these might rightly wish for. Of course, the uncalled-for doing what will wound others, merely in order to show our difference, is blameable and arrogant. But are we to abate anything of the power and completeness of our actions when in the path of duty ? Are we to refuse ourselves any alleviation of these, or to allow ourselves any delay, merely that we might not offend the weak ? Far be it ! Christ was not accustomed to deal so with the prejudices of His day. You admit this also ; but, you say, there are certain trifles in our outward bearing and behaviour, which do not properly belong to the domain of conscience at all ; and in these you think we should rather adhere to than withstand the prevailing opinion of men. If I am to grant you this, I grant it only to your weakness. But are there and can there be such trifles ? I admit there are a thousand things—in dress, manners, verbal expression—concerning whose morality or immorality, regarded by themselves and in general, nothing can be said. But in connection with other parts of our conduct, there will always be in every action one way of doing these things better than any other. We are to perfect our consciences by everywhere finding out this better way ; and when this is known, any divergence therefrom for the sake of pleasing any man, would be to

choose a way in which, soon, no hypocrisy, disguise, or falseness, would be strange to you.

Moreover, secondly, *that acknowledged duty* of being ready always to give an answer to our brethren, is *counteracted* and wholly disannulled by such conduct. We have seen that this law obliges us to give place to no thoughtless habit, and should we now comply with the thoughtless habit of others? it obliges us not to act in any case alone upon the authority of others, and should we now yield to *their* authority, whose views and sentiments we reject? What account can be given of such conduct? Should you reply to one of those for whose sake you so acted, that you did so to prevent him from thinking this or that to your disadvantage, or from having an aversion towards you, would you not thereby as good as undo what you did? and does not such conduct therefore make such a confession, which is yet your duty, impossible? But, you will say, ought we not to do something to prevent men who would not ask us for the reason of our conduct, but judge according to their preconceived opinions, from forming an erroneous judgment? I answer, No: you are under no obligation whatever to such. If they are not near enough to you to inquire, neither are they to judge. But if they lack the necessary frankness and trust to inquire; well, then let their incorrect judgment and their increasing error be their well-deserved punishment. You have done your part by being in readiness to give an answer.

If you wish to do more, then, thirdly (there is no help for it), while you think you esteem them, you *show* in a very striking manner *your contempt* for them. It is impossible to show true respect for others, unless we at the same time respect ourselves. By degrading yourself to serve their weaknesses you degrade them, by supposing them to desire and approve of it. To suppose that they do not

perceive your dissimulation is to believe that they lack the commonest and most requisite knowledge of men. To suppose that, even when they see you desiring to walk in the way of uprightness, they yet cannot rest, if you differ from them in trifles, is to show that you credit them with no notion of the true nature of virtue and of piety. To suppose that they could not be brought to a better mind by instruction and example, is to show that you seek in them but little calm reflection, but little sincere regard for truth and wisdom. And the treatment of men hence arising is not that of heedful love, or of indulgent regard, but of the most objectionable and reprehensible arrogance—as if men, who are created by God like ourselves and have like powers and like grace bestowed on them, were to be evermore regarded as children and as minors. So then we show true respect for others only as we remain true to our convictions even in the least things, and as we cheerfully explain our principles and sentiments, so as to enable every one to “prove all things and hold fast that which is good.” Ask your own inward feeling to what you yield in the long run the greater influence over your mind—to straightforward, open honesty, or to complaisant prudence? Ask your own experience, whereby more good has been done in the world by the steadfast mind which shrinks from nothing that may befall it in the way of truth, or by that worldly-minded wisdom which mixes so much that is dulcifying but polluting with the good that its virtue is destroyed. Ask the Scriptures and the Spirit of God, if you have it, which is the more in harmony with the religion you profess, a course of conduct which establishes perhaps among many persons an apparent peace, by concealing the difference of sentiment which exists, or one which unites the really like-minded in that fellowship of soul by which alone the kingdom of God can be promoted. These ques-

tions decide for yourselves: but remember that if you prefer to deceive your fellow-men, yet you will have to give a strict account to Him who has made man upright (Eccles. vii. 29).

W. E. COLLIER.

BISHOP TILLOTSON.

"Of all the members of the Low Church party Tillotson stood highest in general estimation. As a preacher he was thought by his contemporaries to have surpassed all rivals, living or dead. Posterity has reversed this judgment. Yet Tillotson still keeps his place as a legitimate English classic. His highest flights were indeed far below those of Taylor, of Barrow, of South: but his oratory was more correct and equable than theirs. No quaint conceits, no pedantic quotations from Talmudists and Scholiasts, no mean images, buffoon stories, scurrilous invectives, ever marred the effect of his grave and temperate discourses. His reasoning was just sufficiently profound and sufficiently refined to be followed by a popular audience with that slight degree of intellectual exertion which is a pleasure. His style is not brilliant, but it is pure, transparently clear, and equally free from the levity and from the stiffness which disfigure the sermons of some eminent divines of the seventeenth century. He is always serious: yet there is about his manner a certain graceful ease which marks him as a man who knows the world, who has lived in populous cities, and in splendid courts, and who has conversed not only with books but with lawyers and merchants, wits and beauties, statesmen and princes. The greatest charm of his compositions, however, is derived from the benignity and candour which appear in every line, and which shone forth not less conspicuously in his life than in his writings."—*Macaulay*.

Homiletic Sketches on the Book of Psalms.

Our Purpose.—Many learned and devout men have gone *philologically* through this TEHELIM, this book of Hebrew hymns, and have left us the rich results of their inquiries in volumes within the reach of every Biblical student. To do the mere verbal *hermeneutics* of this book, even as well as it has been done, would be to contribute nothing fresh in the way of evoking or enforcing its Divine ideas. A thorough HOMILETIC treatment it has never yet received, and to this work we here commit ourselves, determining to employ the best results of modern Biblical scholarship.

Our Method.—Our plan of treatment will comprise four sections:—(1.) The HISTORY of the passage. Lyric poetry, which the book is, is a delineation of living character; and the key, therefore, to unlock the meaning and reach the spirit of the words is a knowledge of the men and circumstances that the poet sketches with his lyric pencil.—(2.) ANNOTATIONS of the passage. This will include short explanatory notes on any ambiguous word, phrase, or allusion that may occur.—(3.) The ARGUMENT of the passage. A knowledge of the main drift of an author is amongst the most essential conditions for interpreting his meaning.—(4.) The HOMILETICS of the passage. This is our main work. We shall endeavour so to group the Divine ideas that have been legitimately elicited, as to suggest such thoughts, and indicate such sermonising methods, as may promote the proficiency of modern pulpit ministrations.

Subject.—Aspects of a Godly Man.

The transgression of the wicked saith within my heart
That there is no fear of God before his eyes.
For he flattereth himself in his own eyes,
Until his iniquity be found to be hateful.
The words of his mouth are iniquity and deceit :
He hath left off to be wise, and to do good.
He deviseth mischief upon his bed ;
He setteth himself in a way that is not good ;
He abhorreth not evil.
Thy mercy, O Lord, is in the heavens,
And thy faithfulness reacheth unto the clouds.
Thy righteousness is like the great mountains ;
Thy judgments are a great deep :
O Lord, thou preservest man and beast.
How excellent is thy loving-kindness, O God !

Therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadow of thy wings.

They shall be abundantly satisfied
With the fatness of thy house ;
And thou shalt make them drink
Of the river of thy pleasures.
For with thee is a fountain of life :
In thy light shall we see light,
O continue thy loving-kindness unto them that know thee :
And thy righteousness to the upright in heart.
Let not the foot of pride come against me,
And let not the hand of the wicked remove me.
There are the workers of iniquity fallen :
They are cast down, and shall not be able to rise.—Psalm xxxvi. 1—12.

HISTORY.—"To the chief musician a psalm of David the servant of the Lord." "To the chief musician." By a servant of Jehovah. By David. This peculiar collocation of the words, which occurs only here and in the title of the eighteenth psalm, seems to imply something more than would have been conveyed by the description, David a servant of Jehovah. The difference intended may be this, that servant of Jehovah is not added to the name as a descriptive epithet, but is itself the salient point of the inscription, the name being added merely to identify the person. This would seem to show that, for some reason founded in the psalm itself, it is important that it be regarded as the work of a servant of Jehovah, one inspired by him, perhaps in opposition to the inspiration of depravity referred to in the next verse."—*Alexander*. The word psalm is not in the original, it is supplied by the translators.

ANNOTATIONS.—*Ver. 1.*—"The transgression of the wicked saith within my heart," &c. A very difficult expression is this, and one on which expositors differ widely. Hence the various renderings, "The voice of evil is deep in the heart of the ungodly."—*Four Friends*. "An oracle of transgression hath the ungodly in his heart."—*Delitzsch*. "Thus saith depravity to the wicked in the midst of my heart."—*Alexander*. The idea to me seems to be this—from the conduct of wicked men around me my inward conviction is that they have no fear of God before them.

Ver. 2.—"For he flattereth himself in his own eyes." The idea is, he overrates himself, puts a judgment upon his character that is not founded on fact. He is admiring himself, he appears beautiful in his own eyes. "Until his iniquity be found to be hateful." *Marg.*: "Until he find his iniquity to hate." The idea seems to be that he so prided himself on his own strength and goodness that he pursues a course of action that renders him hateful and abhorrent.

Ver. 3.—"The words of his mouth are iniquity and deceit: he hath left off to be wise, and to do good." His language is perverse and false, and his conduct foolish and worthless.

Ver. 4.—"He deviseth mischief upon his bed: he setteth himself in a way that is not good; he abhorreth not evil." When he retires to rest, his wakeful moments are occupied, not in devout meditations, not in devising plans for extending virtue and happiness, but in devising mischief.

Ver. 5.—"Thy mercy, O Lord, is in the heavens, and thy faithfulness reacheth unto the clouds." Here the character of the Eternal is introduced in sublime contrast to that of the wicked. The idea is that both God's wisdom and faithfulness transcend our conception as the heavens and the clouds are beyond our reach.

Ver. 6.—"Thy righteousness is like the great mountains." *Marg.:* "Mountains of God." Mountains are the emblems of stability, God's justice is fixed as the everlasting hills. Nay, more, "The mountains shall depart," &c., &c. "Thy judgments are a great deep." The meaning of this is, Thy dispensations with man, which are expressions of Thy devisions and judgments, are an ever-surging fathomless abyss. "Thy way is in the sea," &c., &c.

Ver. 7.—"How excellent is thy loving-kindness, O God! therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadow of thy wings." "How precious is Thy mercy, Elohim, that the children of men find refuge in the shadow of Thy wings."--*Delitzsch.* Because the Eternal is merciful, His people seek His guardianship as helpless birds seek protection under their mother's wing.

Ver. 8.—"They shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of thy house." "They satiate themselves, they drink full draughts of the fatness of Thy house. The house of God is His sanctuary, the general domain of His mercy and His grace." "And thou shalt make them drink of the river of thy pleasures." God's "river of pleasure," what is this? Fathomless, clear as crystal, never ceasing in its flow.

Ver. 9.—"For with thee is the fountain of life." He is the original, unbounded ever-active Source of all existences; all material universes, and mental principalities and powers, are but streams from Him. "In thy light shall we see light." God is the light of souls, and nothing in the universe is rightly seen but through Him.

Ver. 10.—"O continue (*Marg.:* "Draw out at length") thy loving-kindness unto them that know thee; and thy righteousness to the upright in heart." Now comes the language of prayer. The meaning of this is, perpetuate to all the true and good, Thy mercy and righteousness.

Ver. 11.—“*Let not the foot of pride come against me, and let not the hand of the wicked remove me.*” The simple meaning of this is, protect me from all that will corrupt my character and destroy my peace.

Ver. 12.—“*There are the workers of iniquity fallen: they are cast down, and shall not be able to rise.*” “The prayer is followed by a sudden assurance of its being answered, in the strength of which the psalmist speaks of his desire as already accomplished. ‘*There*’ has very much the same sense as in common parlance when uttered as a sudden exclamation. *There!* they have fallen already. Strictly explained, it means on the very spot, and in the very midst of their anticipated triumph.”—*Alexander.*

ARGUMENT.—“This remarkable psalm,” says Alexander, “consists of three distinguishable parts besides the title. The first contains a strong description of human depravity, ver. 1—4. The second contrasts with this the divine excellence, ver. 5—9. In the third the psalmist prays to be delivered from the first and made a partaker of the second, with a strong assurance that his desire will be fulfilled, ver. 10—12.”

HOMILETICS. Homiletically, this psalm presents to us three subjects :

I. **THE CHARACTER OF THE WICKED.** “The transgression of the wicked saith within my heart,” &c. There is a faculty in every godly soul that correctly reads and interprets moral character, that can detect wickedness, however pious the forms it may assume. It is a kind of new sense that comes into the soul with genuine goodness. We have read of certain blind persons whose senses are so keen to outward objects that, without being told, they not only know when persons are in the room, but even who they are. They learn this, not by sound, by oral information, or even by touch, but by some keen sense of which we know nothing. A human spirit in high vital sympathy with truth and God, is, in some such way, sensitively alive to the presence of depravity. Wherever it appears piety says within its heart—there it is! What did this good man say within his heart concerning the wicked men around him? In other words, what did he detect in them? (1) *Practical atheism.* “There is no fear of God before his eyes.” Though, theoretically, not only might they hold, but defend the existence of a Supreme Being, yet

in their heart they had no God. Heart-faith in God reveals itself in the beauties of a holy life. He detects in the wicked (2) *Self-flattery*. "For he flattereth himself in his own eyes." Sinners are all self-flatterers; they judge themselves by false standards, and put a fictitious estimate on themselves. What is vile dross they regard as precious gold. Though to holy eyes and to God they are as hideous as demons, in their own eyes they are as lovely as angels. Thus the wicked man deceives himself, "until his iniquity is found to be hateful." What on earth is more abhorrent even to wicked men than vanity in others? To a godly soul it is repulsive in the highest degree. He detects in the wicked (3) *Perverse speech*. "The words of his mouth are iniquity and deceit." They spoke immorality and falsehood. "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." They were corrupt in heart, and their words, like streams from a polluted fountain, carried out the uncleanness. Thus they "left off to be wise and to do good." He detects in the wicked (4) *Mischievous devices*. "He deviseth mischief upon his bed." They were plotting wrong, not only in the day but in the night, the fit season for devout thought and worship.

Such is what this godly man read in the character of the wicked men around him. All this he states the wicked "saith within my heart." A godly man can interpret the ungodly, but the ungodly cannot interpret him, for the obvious reason that he was at one time subject to their thoughts and feelings, but they have never experienced his. A truly godly man can say, "I know the world, but the world knows me not." The other subject here is:

II. THE GLORY OF GOD. Here the Eternal is adored (1) For what He is *in Himself*. "Thy mercy, O Lord, is in the heavens, and thy faithfulness reacheth unto the clouds." The idea is that God's compassion and truthfulness transcend our highest conceptions. His mercy is not a mere sentiment or passion, subject to change, but a principle settled as truth itself. "Thy righteousness is like the great mountains, and

thy judgments are a great deep." Thy rectitude is as settled as the everlasting hills, and the dispensations of Thy Providence are as a trackless, boundless ocean. How great is God! His thoughts are not as our thoughts, nor His ways as our ways. "As the heavens are above the earth," &c. Here the Eternal is adored (2) For what He is to *His creatures*. He is the *preserver* of all. "O Lord, thou preservest man and beast." "He upholds all things by the word of His power." "In Him all things consist." He is the all in all of the good. He is their *loving Guardian*. "The children of men put their trust under the shadow of thy wings." "How often would I have gathered thee as a hen gathers her chickens under her wings, but ye would not." He is their *Soul-Satisfier*. "They shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of my house," *i.e.*, richness of my house. God's house is not a temple made with hands, it is the universe. "In my father's house are many mansions," &c. "And thou shalt make them drink of the river of thy pleasures." (a) God is *happy*. "Thy pleasures"—the ever "blessed God." (b) His happiness is a *river*. It is not a lake that depends on the temperature, not a shallow stream that runs at certain seasons and is exhaled by the sun, but a river, clear, deep, exhaustless. He is its Fountain. "With thee is the fountain of life."* The Fountain whence the universe, with all its virtues and blessedness, streamed; whence all things come but *sin*; the Fountain inexhaustible, ever active, sending forth new rivers of beings, and excellences, and pleasures, every moment. (c) *Man's happiness is participation* in God's own happiness. "Thou shalt make them drink of the river of thy pleasures; in thy light shall we see light." What meaneth this? In Thy happiness shall we enjoy happiness. What a grand view of God and His universe have we here! . . . We have here :

III. THE PRAYER OF THE GOOD. (1.) The *subject* of the prayer. (a) The continuation of Divine favour. "O continue thy loving-kindness unto them that know thee, and thy

* See "Homilist," series ii., vol. ii., p. 266.

righteousness to the upright in heart." (b) Protection from evil. "Let not the foot of pride come against me, and let not the hand of the wicked remove me." The meaning is, let me not be overcome by mine enemies. (2) The *answer* to the prayer. "There are the workers of iniquity fallen: they are cast down, and shall not be able to rise." The suppliant here realises the blessings he sought. He sees the prostration of his enemies, and their utter discomfiture.

CONCLUSION. Read well the characters of the unconverted men around you; think upon the wicked; so realise the impious and immoral principles which animate them, that you may shun them with abhorrence, and seek with earnestness their extermination! Keep the great God ever before you. Let His mercy, which is "in the heavens," His truthfulness, which reacheth "unto the clouds," and His righteousness, which is like the "great mountains," inspire you with unbounded confidence and high devotion; and let it be your endeavour to participate in His happiness, to get satisfied with the "fatness of His house," and to drink of the "river of His pleasures!" In all, realise your constant dependence on Him, supplicate the continuance of His favour, and His interposition to deliver you from all your enemies, and to grant you an everlasting participation in the river of His pleasure!

RELIGION.—"We know, and it is our pride to know, that man is by his constitution a religious animal; that atheism is against not only our reason but our instincts, and that it cannot prevail long. But if in the moment of rest, and in a drunken delirium from the hot spirit drawn out of the alembic of hell, we should uncover our nakedness by throwing off that Christian religion which has hitherto been our boast and comfort, and one great source of civilisation amongst us, and among other nations, we are apprehensive (being well aware that the mind will not endure a veil) that some uncouth, pernicious, and degrading superstition might take place of it."—*Burke*.

Homiletic Sketches on the Book of Job.

The Book of Job is one of the grandest sections of Divine Scripture. It has never yet, to our knowledge, been treated in a purely Homiletic method for Homiletic ends. Besides many learned expositions on the book found in our general commentaries, we have special exegetical volumes of good scholarly and critical worth; such as Dr. Barnes, Wemyss, Mason Goode, Noyes Lee, Delitzsch, and Herman Hedwick Bernard: the last is in every way a masterly production. For us, therefore, to go into philology and verbal criticism, when such admirable works are available to all students, would be superfluous, if not presumption. Ambiguous terms, when they occur, we shall of course explain, and occasionally suggest an improved rendering: but our work will be chiefly, if not entirely, Homiletic. We shall essay to bring out from the grand old words those Divine verities which are true and vital to man as man in all lands and ages. These truths we shall frame in an order as philosophic and suggestive as our best powers will enable us to do; and this in order to help the earnest preachers of God's Holy Word.

Subject.—Job's Reply to Bildad. (2.) His Language to the Eternal. (b.) Concerning his Sufferings.

Wherefore then hast thou brought me forth out of the womb?
Oh that I had given up the ghost, and no eye had seen me!
I should have been as though I had not been;
I should have been carried from the womb to the grave.
Are not my days few? cease then,
And let me alone, that I may take comfort a little,
Before I go whence I shall not return,
Even to the land of darkness and the shadow of death;
A land of darkness, as darkness itself:
And of the shadow of death, without any order,
And where the light is as darkness."—Job x. 18—22.

EXEGETICAL REMARKS.—*Ver. 18.*—"Wherefore then hast thou brought me forth out of the womb? Oh that I had given up the ghost and no eye had seen me." Language very similar to this, and identical in spirit, we found in chapter iii. 11, 12. (See our remarks on the whole of that chapter in vol. iii. page 336, and vol. iv. page 14, Editor's Series.)

Ver. 19.—"I should have been as though I had not been. I should have been carried from the womb to the grave." How strongly does the patriarch here deplore the fact of his existence!

Ver. 20.—"Are not my days few? cease then, and let me alone, that I may take comfort a little." The idea here seems to be, as my life is so short, let not the whole of the brief space be spent in suffering, let there be a little comfort.

Vers. 21, 22.—"Before I go whence I shall not return, even to the land of darkness and the shadow of death," &c. We have seen no translation that is more true to the original or more forceful than this version. The patriarch struggles after the strongest language to express his impression of the deep darkness prevailing in the under world. Milton's language is strong, but scarcely so strong as this, "No light, but rather darkness visible." "*Without order.*" Having no arrangements, no distinction of inhabitants, poor and rich, master and slave, king and beggar, all are there equal.

HOMILETICS. The patriarch had already in the previous verses expressed to the Almighty that his sufferings were (1) too great to render any efforts at self-consolation effective, (2) too deserved to justify any hope of relief, (3) too overwhelming to check the expression of his complaint, and now as (4) too crushing to give to existence anything but an intolerable curse. His sufferings, judging from his language here, had destroyed within him for a time three of the primary instincts of the soul—sense of duty, love of life, and hope of a hereafter.

I. A SENSE OF DUTY. Sense of obligation to the Supreme is an instinct as universal as man, as deep as life itself; but the patriarch, in wishing that he had never been, or that his first breath had been extinguished, had lost all feeling in relation to the wonderful mercies which his Creator had conferred upon him during the past years of his existence. What were those mercies? (1) *Great material wealth.* So far as wealth was concerned, for years he had been "the greatest of all the men of the east." No doubt this affluent man drew from his worldly possessions many and varied enjoyments. (2) *Great domestic enjoyment.* He had seven sons and three daughters. As in the case of most children, their conduct would sometimes grieve his heart, and their well-being awaken within him at times anxieties; this would be little, however, compared with the high pleasures which his parental nature would enjoy

from their innocent sports in childhood, from their filial devotion, and the high hopes with which their future would inspire him. (3) *Immense social influence.* He not only obtained vast power over his contemporaries, but a power that awakened within them the deepest sympathies of grateful love and high devotion. When he walked through the city, the young men hid themselves, "the aged rose and stood up, the princes refrained talking and laid their hands on their lips, the nobles held their peace, and their tongues cleaved to the roof of their mouth." What high enjoyment must he have derived from breathing in a social atmosphere balmy and sunny with the love of all around him.

Now, in saying to the Almighty, "Wherefore hast thou brought me forth out of the womb?" he seems utterly oblivious to all these mercies which heaven had so abundantly showered on his path for so many years. No sense of gratitude stirred within him. It is often thus with man. He forgets a long life of enjoyment in a few days or weeks of suffering, and the song of gratitude is drowned in the roar of discontent. As the old retired mariner thinks and talks more of one shipwreck than of all the propitious years of his happy journeyings on the sea, so man in one brief week of sorrow and suffering ignores all his former years of health and joy.

II. A LOVE OF LIFE. "Skin for skin; yea, all that a man hath will he give in exchange for his life." Seldom do we find, even amongst the most miserable of men, one who struggles not to perpetuate his existence. "What thinkest thou," said Socrates to Aristodemus, "of this continual love of life, this dread of dissolution which takes possession of us the moment we are conscious of existence?" "I think of it," was the reply, "as the means employed by the same great and wise Artist, deliberately determined to preserve what He has made." But this instinct Job now seems to have lost, if not its entire existence, its power. He desires extinction. Existence has become so intolerable that he wishes he had never had it, and yearns for annihilation. Two thoughts are

here suggested. First: *There may be something worse for man than annihilation.* Death is felt the world over to be the king of terrors; the heart of humanity recoils with horror at his presence, and quivers with agony under his dark shadow; still there may be something worse. Man is capable of sinking into a condition of existence here, where he shall hail death as a welcome guest. Secondly: *This annihilation is beyond the reach of creatures.* None but God can absolutely destroy. Has He ever destroyed a man? will He ever do it?

III. HOPE OF A HEREAFTER. Hope for future good is another of the strongest instincts of our nature. "Thou didst make me hope when I was upon my mother's breasts." This is an instinct which keeps the soul of the world ever toward a future; nay, which bears it into a hereafter and gives it a beatified life. Indeed it is one of those powers within us that, like a mainspring, keeps every wheel in action. Man never is but always to be blest. We bathe our weary natures in the balmy seas which hope has created. Job seems to have lost this now. Hence his description of the future. "Before I go whence I shall not return, even to the land of darkness, and the shadow of death; a land of darkness as darkness itself, and of the shadow of death without any order, and where the light is as darkness." He saw a future, but what was it?

(1) *Darkness.* A starless, moonless midnight, a vast immeasurable abyss—"the land of darkness." His hereafter was black, not a ray of light streamed from the firmament. (2) *Confusion.* "Without any order." Small and great, young and old, all together in black chaos. From this state of dark confusion into which he was going, he felt he should "not return." There is no return from the great under world. There is but *one probation.* This is, as we have seen, an arrangement both wise and kind.*

CONCLUSION. Learn, first: *That great suffering in this world in the case of individuals does not mean great sin.* Job's sufferings were inexpressibly great, yet on the whole he was a just man

* See "Homilist," series i., vol. vi., p. 25.

and upright, one "that feared God and eschewed evil." Learn, secondly: *The power of the devil over man.* Whence came all these sufferings? "And the Lord said unto Satan, Behold he is in thine hand, but save his life." The devil plays sad havoc with human nature when the Eternal permits him. Behold the "works of the devil" in Job, for the moment crushing the strongest instincts of the soul, the sense of duty, the love of life, and the hope of a hereafter! Learn, thirdly: *The value of the Gospel.* This man had no clear revelation of a blessed future. Hence one scarcely wonders at his frequent and impassioned complaints. How different our life to his! The grave does not bound our horizon, the brighter and the wider regions of life loom beyond.

"A change from woe to joy, from earth to heaven!
Death gives me this: it leads me calmly where
The souls that long ago from mine were riven
May meet again! Death answers many a prayer.
Bright day shine on, be glad! days brighter far
Are stretched before mine eyes than those of mortals are."

—Robert Nicoll.

Sermonic Glances at the Gospel of St. John.

As our purpose in the treatment of this Gospel is purely the development, in the briefest and most suggestive form, of Sermonic outlines, we must refer our readers to the following works for all critical inquiries into the author and authorship of the book, and also for any minute criticisms on difficult clauses. The works we shall especially consult are:—"Introduction to New Testament," by Bleek; "Commentary on John," by Tholuck; "Commentary on John," by Hengstenberg; "Introduction to the Study of the Gospels," by Westcott; "The Gospel History," by Ebrard; "Our Lord's Divinity," by Liddon; "St. John's Gospel," by Oosterzee; "Doctrine of the Person of Christ," by Dornor; Lange; &c., &c.

Subject.—Moral Usefulness.

"Now after two days he departed thence, and went into Galilee. For Jesus himself testified, that a prophet hath no honour in his own country. Then, when he was come into Galilee, the Galileans received him, having seen all the things that he did at Jerusalem at the feast: for they also went unto the feast."—John iv. 43—45.

EXPOSITION.—The only difficult question in connection with this passage is this, What does the Heavenly Teacher here mean by "country" (*Πατρίς*). There are several answers presented by different Biblical critiques to this question. (1) "Galilee is to be taken in opposition to Nazareth. In this city, His own country, Jesus had no honour, but elsewhere in Galilee He was received as a prophet."—*Lightfoot, Kresfl*. (2) "Galilee is to be taken in opposition to Judea. Judea was His birthplace, and so His own country, and it was also the land of the prophets: but there He had found no reception, and had been compelled to discontinue His ministry. In Galilee, on the contrary, all were ready to honour Him."—*Ebrard, Norton*. (3) "Galilee is His own country, where, according to the proverb, He would have had no honour, except He had first gone to Judea and distinguished Himself there. It was His miracles and works abroad that gave Him fame and favour at home."—*Meyer, Alford*. We do not regard the subject of sufficient importance to canvass these conflicting views, and to advocate or propound a conclusion of our own.

HOMILETICS. The paragraph suggests to us certain practical thoughts concerning *man's moral usefulness in society*.

I. MAN MAY DO MUCH MORAL GOOD WITHIN A SHORT PERIOD. "Now after two days he departed thence and went into Galilee." Two days Jesus spent in Samaria, and what did He accomplish spiritually within that short period? Many, we are told, "believed on Him for the saying of the woman," and "many *more* believed because of His own word." His words during that period broke the religious monotony of the Samaritans, set the minds of men to earnest and independent thinking. He won many at once to His cause, and He scattered those incorruptible seeds of truth which commenced germination at once, and which have yielded glorious harvests through all subsequent ages. The Infinite only can tell the amount of spiritual good that has resulted from Christ's ministry in Samaria during those "two days." Every man may and *ought* to accomplish great spiritual good in "two days,"—not only by preaching to vast congregations and addressing multitudes through the Press, but even in a more private way—by indoctrinating the family with Christly sentiments, and distributing through the neighbourhood the "Bread of Life." We do not want a long life in order to be useful, in "two days" we may accomplish much. No man

on the "great day" of trial will be able to plead the brevity of his mortal life as an excuse for not having been morally useful to his fellow-men. We may not have time enough to make fortunes, become scientific, or win fame, but we have time enough to be useful.

II. MAN'S EFFORTS TO DO GOOD ARE OFTEN OBSTRUCTED BY A STUPID PREJUDICE. "For Jesus himself testified that a prophet hath no honour in his own country." Christ here states a fact. Of course, there are exceptions to it. Many men gain some kind of honour from their countrymen, but as a rule *prophets* do not. Home teachers are not so valued as the foreign. This is one of the great practical errors in all human society. There is no *good* reason for it. The doctrines of a teacher, whether true or false, salutary or pernicious, are independent of the country of the teacher. There are *bad* reasons for it. The prejudice springs from jealousy, envy, pride, and such vile passions.* Christ felt that this prejudice was against His usefulness, and prejudice in some form or other has been felt by every man, endeavouring to do good, to be one of his chief obstructions. Prejudices are fetters that enslave the intellect, clouds that obscure the vision, bolts that shut out the truth. Men in England are filled with prejudice concerning the elements of dignity, the means of happiness, the dogmas of theology, and the forms of worship. "Prejudice," is has been said, "is like a current at sea, which being stronger than the wind, resistlessly carries the vessel back, so that instead of the mariner finding himself so many miles nearer home, he has really lost ground."

III. MAN'S DESIRE FOR DOING GOOD SHOULD BE THE INSPIRATION OF HIS LIFE. Christ leaves Samaria, confronts a powerful prejudice, and enters Galilee—what for? In order to be useful. "He went about doing good." Spiritually to bless humanity was the one grand purpose of His sublime life. "I must work the works of Him that sent me, for the night cometh, when no man can work." Such should be the grand aim of all men, and this for two reasons:

* See remarks on this subject in *The Genius of the Gospel*, page 320.

First: It is the *greatest* work. What work on earth is so divinely grand as that of enlightening the human intellect, enfranchising the human will, purifying the fountains of the human heart, transforming the moral man into the image of God's own Son? All other occupations and enterprises are but puerilities compared with this.

Secondly: It is the *most recompensing* work. He that converteth a soul "covers a multitude of sins," wins the sympathies of immortal spirits, and secures the approbation of his own conscience and his God. The fruits of all other labours we leave behind at death, but from the field of spiritual usefulness we gather sheaves that will inspire us with ineffable delight when time shall be no more.

IV. MAN'S POWER TO DO GOOD INCREASES AS HIS PAST USEFULNESS GETS RECOGNISED. "The Galileans received him, having seen all the things he did at Jerusalem at the feast, for they also went unto the feast." Christ had done great things at Jerusalem, as we learn from chapter ii. 23. The Galileans, to whom He now addressed Himself, had in the holy city witnessed the mighty wonders He had wrought, and now as He came amongst them they were prepared to receive Him, and they did receive Him. What they knew of Him disposed them to accept Him. We get power to do good amongst men as our past good works get recognised. Man's power of spiritual usefulness is cumulative; the more good he does the more his capacity for usefulness increases. There is no wearing out in the cause of spiritual usefulness. The more useful a man has been, the more useful he may yet be. His career is not like the growth of life, which, after its culmination, weakens and dies, but like the river, becomes stronger and stronger as it proceeds to its destination.

"Be useful where thou livest, that they may
Both want and wish thy presence still.
Kindness, good parts, great places are the way
To compass this. Find out man's want and will,
And meet them there. All worldly joys go less
To the one joy of doing kindnesses."—*George Herbert.*

Germs of Thought.

Subject.—Wells of Salvation.

“Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation.
—Isa. xii. 3.

IN the preceding chapter the coming of the Messiah is predicted, and the work He would perform is prefigured by allusions to the deliverance of Israel from Egypt (ver. 16). When Israel was delivered from Egyptian bondage, the people sang a new song, and rejoiced in the God of their salvation. So in the day when the Lord would work a greater deliverance for His people by a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a branch out of his roots—then there would be general joy, God would become their strength and song, and with joy would they draw water out of the wells of salvation.

These words, uttered at first by the glowing lips of the prophet Isaiah, as words of prophecy, may be read as facts in history now; for the Saviour came in the fulness of time, and opened a fountain for sin and uncleanness, and a fountain of living waters for the healing of the nations. On the last day of the Feast of the Tabernacles, when water was fetched with pomp and joy from the pool of Siloam, and poured on the sacrifice, mixed with wine, Jesus stood forth and said, “If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink.” Then were the words of the prophet fulfilled, then the well of salvation was opened, and men were invited to come, and with joy draw water therefrom. In directing attention to this Gospel in Isaiah, let us notice—

I. *The metaphor by which salvation is here described.* “Wells of Salvation.” Water is a favourite emblem in the sacred Scriptures for setting forth the blessings of salvation, especially in the writings of Old Testament prophets. And all

are intended to set forth the fulness, and freeness, and blessedness of Gospel times. Salvation, like a well, is (a) *Invisible in its source*. God prepares the water for the wells in hidden springs. Man can make a well, but he cannot make a spring; so men may form systems of religion of their own, but they are only wells without water. Salvation is a well of God's own construction, and He alone from His own hidden resources can supply the life-giving water. There is much mystery in the source of an ordinary well of water, yet we do not allow our inability to fully understand it to present an insuperable barrier in the way of accepting its great blessings; let us exercise the same common sense in our treatment of the wells of salvation. A well is (s) *Inexhaustible in its supply*. A stream may be dried up, a river may fail to flow, a cistern may be exhausted, but a well is fed from hidden deep springs, and as a rule it cannot be exhausted—giving doth not impoverish it, as withholding would not enrich it. It is pre-eminently so with the wells of salvation:

“When all created streams are dry
Thy fulness is the same,”

may be sung of the fountain of living waters. In the Gospel of Christ there is enough for each, enough for all, enough for evermore.

Blessed be God for a salvation so commensurate with the ruin of the fall, so adequate to the spiritual wants of our common humanity. God has not provided a little pool, a narrow stream, a shallow river, but a deep and ever-springing well. A well is (γ) *Inestimable in its service*. An oriental would understand the value of water better than we do, for in the East water is often scarce and scanty in its supply. The weary traveller beneath the scorching sun—faint, and thirsty, and ready to die—would rather come to a well of water than find a bag of gold; we may do without many things in this world, but we cannot do without water; and we cannot live without the water from the wells of salvation:

“whoso drinketh of the water that Jesus can give, shall never die.” What service this water of life renders! pardon, peace, sanctification, heaven. Such blessings are inestimable, as they are incomparable.

II. *The means by which salvation is to be obtained.* “With joy shall ye *draw*,” &c. It is not enough for the thirsty to draw near to a well, not enough to look into it, and listen to the music of its waters—an effort must be made, it must be appropriated. Except there be *participation* of the water, no benefit can be derived. (a) *We must “draw.”* God provides the well, but we must use the hand of faith; by the rope of effort we must let down the pitcher of desire—and it must be an empty pitcher, not full of our own good works—and as we draw the blessing up, we shall not thank the means, or the instruments by which we obtain the water, but we shall thank Him who provided it so plentifully and freely for us. (b) *We must drink.* Not enough to draw the water to the edge of the well, not enough to lift it to the lips, the water must be *drank* as well as drawn. Every time the Gospel is preached, water is drawn from the wells of salvation; what is needed is that the people should *drink*—that the water may be *in* them as a well springing up to everlasting life. Mere drawing will never save, we must drink, our faith must be of a *practical* and not merely a theoretical kind. Let us use the means for obtaining salvation; if we do not, although the water of life is so free and abundant, we shall faint, and for ever die.

III. *The spirit in which salvation is to be received.* “With joy,” &c. The teaching of our text harmonises with the inductions of reason, and with the dictates of common sense. For how else could we draw water out of the wells of salvation? Will not the *sufferer* go gladly to the physician who has the ability and willingness to heal? Will not the *prisoner* meet his judge with joy who he knows will pardon and acquit him? Will not the *fainting traveller* go with joy to the well he discovers close by, where the cool and sparkling water flows which can slake his thirst and renew his

strength? And shall *we* not go singing a new song as we draw near the wells of salvation? and as we drink of the life-giving streams shall we not shout for joy to the rock of our salvation? When we come to Jesus sorry for our sins, He will turn our sorrow into joy, He will make us joyful now, and joyful for ever; for in "His presence is fulness of joy, and at His right hand are pleasures for evermore." The traveller is sometimes deceived by the mirage in the desert; but the wells of salvation are no mirage, they have been found and *proved* by myriads crossing the plain of time, and we may come with holy boldness and full assurance of faith, and draw, and drink, and live. This water will find its level: it comes from heaven, and if within us, will spring to heaven again, where we shall bathe our weary souls in seas of heavenly rest. "The Spirit and the Bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely."

F. W. BROWN.

Subject.—Spiritual Joy.

"Although the fig-tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines: the labour of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls: yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation."—Habakkuk iii. 17, 18.

SPIRITUAL joy does not consist in mere placidity; it is not like the water, which in fertilising showers descends, and does not depend on our volition or agency; but it is like the water we draw from the well, there must be activity and labour. There can be no happiness without thought.

Spiritual joy is a free, full, and overflowing stream, that takes its rise in the very depth of the divine essence, in the immutability, perfection, abundance, munificence of the divine

nature. While there is a God, and that God is happy, there is no necessity that there should be any unhappy Christians.

Habakkuk thought of God, of His nature, His moral perfections, His covenant, His promise; he not only thought of God generally, but in the particular relation which He sustained to him: "I will joy in the God of *my* salvation." I understand Him in some measure, I feel an interest in Him and He in me."

The mere fact of the existence or benevolence of God cannot make any creature happy; it is the conviction, the intelligent, deeply-rooted, legitimate conclusion that He is our God, can produce joy. This was the case with Habakkuk, and must be so with every true believer.

I. TRUE RELIGION (*i.e.*, ITS DOCTRINES, PROSPECTS, EMOTIONS) DOES IMPART JOY.

Why? Because:—

1. *True religion gives decision to the mind.*

Indecision or dubiousness is always painful, and painful in exact correspondence to the value of the object to which it refers.

2. *True religion imparts true liberty to the mind.*

While bodily bondage is a great evil, spiritual bondage is greater; religion alone imparts to man the charter of freedom—the moment man receives true freedom he is happy, and not before.

(1) Freedom from eternal punishment.

When we are brought under the influence of religion, we are led first to perceive our liability to it, and then to accept of deliverance through Christ.

(2) Freedom from the government of depravity.

The moment a man feels that he is dependent for happiness upon God, he feels desirous to know, love, and please that Being.

(3) Freedom from the evils of affliction.

Afflictions in themselves are evil, they make a man morose, unkind, bitter, despairing, devilish: it is only when applied by God that they become useful to the believer's mind.

3. *True religion imparts exercise and expectation to the mind.*

In order to be happy, there must be a right end in view—the glory of God ; proper rule to guide—the Bible ; and right motives to actuate him—love to God and love to men.

II. THE NATURE OF THIS JOY.

1. *It is always pure.* When does the soul experience it? Only when it is pure.

This is a question not only of facts but of degrees ; not only the pure mind can be happy, but it is happy in exact proportion to its purity. When is it enjoyed? When the soul is raised to contemplate holy objects.

2. *It is personal and progressive.*

It is secret, “ I will rejoice in the Lord ;” and when seen, seen only by its effects.

CALEB MORRIS.

The Preacher's Scrap Room.

SHORT ESSAYS.

THE BLISS OF IGNORANCE.

THAT passage of Gray's,

“ Where ignorance is bliss
’Tis folly to be wise,”

is frequently quoted in a different sense from the one in which the poet intended it to be used. It is often cited to justify that ignorance which, though present bliss may result from it, is, on the whole, more productive of misery than of happiness ; the ignorance in which that person elects to remain, who shuts his eyes and will not look at an impending danger or difficulty, which forethought would modify, if it did not avert. Every one who has perused the poem in which these lines occur, knows that it is not to such ignorance as this that Gray alludes. Contemplating the sports of the Eton College boys at play, the poet inwardly contrasts the immunity from care which characterises their present lot with the ills which inevitably await

them, as future men. But, having called up before his imagination the whole array of evils to which humanity is heir, he abruptly terminates his soliloquy with this reflection :—

“ Yet, ah! why should they know their fate,
Since sorrow never comes too late,
And happiness too swiftly dies?
Thought would destroy their paradise.
No more; where ignorance is bliss
’Tis folly to be wise.”

Which sentiment, considered in relation to the context, will be generally acknowledged to embody the truest philosophy. But if, sometimes, Gray's couplet is quoted to justify such a course of action, or rather inaction, as I have named, how constantly, without avowing the fact, we conform our lives to the perverted idea of the passage! We fearfully shun disagreeable realities which, if we boldly confronted them, would soon cease to terrify: we refuse to grapple with difficulties in their tiny infancy, when we might with ease come off victorious from the contest; but, waiting until they attain to giant proportions, are ourselves overborne by them. Much of the misery of human existence is, doubtless, occasioned because people persist in deceiving themselves—because they will not understand their true condition.

A FATHER'S LOVE.

Often as the love of a mother for her offspring has been made the theme of glowing panegyric by poet and by orator, I doubt if language has ever overstated the disinterestedness and beauty of that affection. But perhaps too much prominence has been given to it, as compared with the meed of praise which is popularly awarded to the love of a father for his offspring. Or, to be more precise, I think that conventional opinion has never done justice to the depth of a father's love. Two facts serve to enhance, in general estimation, the affection of a mother so much above that of a father. The first is this: the mother, more than the father, ministers to the immediate necessities of the children, chiefly guards them in their helpless infancy, executes innumerable little acts of kindness for them to ONE which the father performs. But all this is because home, where the little ones surround her, is the allotted sphere of a mother's activities. *That* is the scene of her life's work, and she would lamentably fail in her duty were she not to exhibit there all those tender qualities which one instinctively associates with her name. But the allotted sphere of a father's activities, the

scene of *his* life's work—to which sphere or scene he is required to be as true as a mother to her household—is the wide world. There, has to engage in a daily warfare, often, Ishmael-like, with his hand against every man's, and every man's hand against his. Still, what is it that chiefly stimulates him in the fight? Is it not the knowledge that he is striving for the welfare of his children?

“ Their thought across his fancy comes,
And gives the battle to his arms.”

Is there any sacrifice that he would not endure for the sake of his little ones? And are not those among the happiest moments of his life when, the struggles of the day at an end, he seeks the peace of his home, and is more than compensated for the rude buffetings of the world by the acclamations of welcome which greet him, like a returned triumphant warrior, from the juvenile crowd that has so long and so anxiously awaited his return? The second fact which conduces to the popular estimate in question is the unvarying manifestation of a mother's love. No degree of baseness on the part of her child seems to check, in the slightest degree, the demonstrativeness of her affection for the erring one. The father indignantly spurns his reprobate son from his presence, and from his home; but the mother clandestinely ministers to his needs, and is capable of clasping to her breast, with all the warmth of caress which characterised her embrace when of old he lay an inoffensive babe within her fond arms, him whose every act and word betokens ingratitude. But is this because the affection of the mother is stronger than that of the father? Or may it not be because her sense of justice is weaker; because her love, unlike the father's, is little else than a blind instinct? Does not the father still regard with undiminished affection the son whom, nevertheless, he has expelled from the sacred sphere of his household? Why, then, has he thus expelled him? From nothing but a high sense of duty: First, duty to the lad whom years of kindness have failed to impress; secondly, duty to himself, whose paternal counsel has been flippantly set at naught; and, lastly, duty to the other members of his home, the moral atmosphere of which was in danger of being polluted by the pestilent presence of his undutiful son. The love of both parents may be in degree precisely the same; but the manifestation of it will be different, being, in the case of the father, with discrimination; in that of the mother, without it.

THORNTON WELLS.

The Chief Founders of the Chief Faiths.

Around no men, amongst all the millions of mankind, does so much interest gather as around the Founders of the Chief Religious Faiths of the world. Such men are sometimes almost lost in the obscurity of remote ages, or of the mystery with which they surrounded themselves, or their early followers invested them. But whenever they can be discerned, their characters analysed, and their deeper experiences understood, they are found to be not only leaders and masters of the multitudes who have adopted more or less of their creed and ritual, but also interpreters (more or less partial) of the universal yearnings of the soul of man. Such men may have seemed to sit at the fountains of human thought and feeling, and to have directed or have coloured the mysterious streams, but they have quite as often indicated in their doctrines and in their deeds the strong courses of the thoughts and feeling which are more permanent and deeper than any one man or even any one age could completely discover. The aim of these papers will be, with necessary brevity, to review the chief of such men, noting suggestively rather than exhaustively, their *biography*, their *circumstances*, their *theology*, and their *ethics*. And in concluding the series it is purposed to compare and to contrast each and all of them with the "One Man whom in the long roll of ages we can love without disappointment, and worship without idolatry, the Man Christ Jesus."

PRINCIPAL BOOKS OF REFERENCE.—Max Müller's "History of Ancient Sanskrit Literature," "The Science of Language," "Chips from a German Workshop;" Rev. F. D. Maurice's "Religions of the World;" Archdeacon Hardwick's "Christ and other Masters;" Rev. J. W. Gardner's "Faiths of the World;" Miss Mary Carpenter's "Last Days of Rammohun Roy;" Rev. F. W. Farrar's "Witness of History to Christ;" Rev. A. W. Williamson's "Journey in North China;" Canon Liddon's Bampton Lecture on "Our Lord's Divinity;" Cousin's "History of Modern Philosophy."

No. I.

GAUTAMA BUDDHA.

(Continued from page 174.)

HAVING glanced at the salient points in the biography and circumstances of the great Hindu, whose system is said now to number above three hundred millions of disciples, we now attempt a short review of his teachings, both theological and ethical. Notwithstanding that a keen and profound interest attaches to the alterations of his doctrine by successive generations, we purpose now confining our attention to what seems to be the teaching of the Founder rather than diverging to the modifications of his followers.

THEOLOGY.

Though Buddhism is a sort of Protestant Reformation of Brahminism, it is, however, much more revolutionary in its methods and in its results than that Reformation was. For Gautama Buddha strenuously resists all authoritative religious teaching. He denies the one God as the Maker and the Ruler of all other forms of being. The very changefulness and unrest of creatures seemed sufficient argument against there existing anywhere an Unchanging and Perfect Creator. All things appear to come into the world according to a law of succession, by a series of causes, and not from any God as a single cause. Hence it has been said that the Buddhist creed is largely negative and nihilistic. However, though we shall find it difficult to fasten upon dogmas about God, or man's relation to God, that can form anything like a definite system, our search for the religious ideas of this great leader need not, nevertheless, be completely fruitless.

The word Buddha means Intelligence. The first proclamation of the original Buddhists before Gautama's time seems to have been that men ought to worship, in some way, that pure Intelligence—that Buddha, for this was the name of the god as well as one appellation of the apostle. The conception of the highest reward and result of such worship was absorption into that pure Intelligence. These two doctrines were received by Gautama Buddha. And moreover, like his predecessors, he believed in the hereditary doctrine of transmigration, and like them too, he argued for the eternal cycles of the universe, and the infinite succession of births and new births. He fully accepted, and enthusiastically enforced, what was also a point in the creed of earlier Buddhists, that he who is now the most degraded of the demons may (through such processes) one day rule highest in the heavens. "He who is at present seated upon the most honourable of the celestial thrones may one day writhe amidst the agonies of a place of torment; and the worm that we crush under our feet may in the course of ages become

a supreme Buddha." In rigid harmony with this belief in the infinite capacity of the human intellect, a belief that virtually deifies the human intellect, Gautama held that the supreme authority of the Vedas, the scriptures of Brahminism, might be questioned, and the knowledge derived from them be subordinated to all other forms of knowledge. He absolutely rejected the custom of sacrificing animals. This partly resulted from his perceiving more clearly than his ancestors how the sacrifice of animals bore upon the Hindu doctrine of transmigration; but chiefly from his refuting the need of all sacrifice for sin. This followed from his denying the consciousness of guilt, because he denied the moral freedom of man. Whatever sin there is, is in his view a necessary thing, belonging by necessity to the world of matter, and to all forms of transient being. This could only be separated from man when, after successions of new births, through cycles of ages, he would be absorbed in the Infinite Light. That absorption meant the attaining to the completeness of unconsciousness, the becoming nothing. For Nothing, under the name Nirvana, is the highest goal of millions of Buddhists. Having this theory of absorption of souls as his "plan of salvation," he preached that that salvation was possible without the mediation of priests, and without belief in books to which the priests had given the idea of a revelation. However, the salvation that had been taught by Brahminism, and had been promulgated through its priests and Vedas, was a deliverance from a world of phantoms and a reversion to original oneness with divinity, while that taught by Gautama Buddha was a weird immersion in an extinction whose only attraction was that "there the wicked cease from troubling and the weary are at rest."

Bristol.

URIJAH R. THOMAS.

(To be continued.)

The Preacher's Finger-Post.

Subject: THE MORAL MEANING OF HUMAN HISTORY.

"And what shall I more say? for the time would fail me to tell of Gedeon, and of Barak, and of Samson, and of Jephthae; of David also, and Samuel, and of the prophets: who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens. Women received their dead raised to life again: and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection: and others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea moreover, of bonds and imprisonment: they were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheep-skins and goat-skins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented: (of whom the world was not worthy:) they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth." —Hebrews xi. 32—38.

These remarkable verses strike us with four things in human history.

I. THE INHUMANITY OF MAN TO MAN. Here we have a list of awful cruelties which man has inflicted on his fellow-creatures, "mockings," "scourgings," "bonds," "im-

prisonment," "stoning," "sawing asunder," and "slaying with the sword," &c., &c. This is only a specimen of universal history, every page of which is stained with human blood. Man has ever been the greatest enemy of man. Whether men have unseen, purely spiritual devils or not, it is manifest that they have in all ages behaved as ruthless devils to each other. Witness wars, persecutions, slaveries, &c., &c. Man's cruelty (1) Argues his *unnaturalness*. The social constitution of man containing deep fountains of social sympathies shows that he was not made, like the predatorial beasts, to prey upon his fellow-creatures. He was made to love and to be loved. Mental philosophy, as well as the Bible, shows this. Man's cruelty (2) Argues his *necessity for the Gospel*. What can overcome cruelty but love? And what love is mighty enough for this but that omnipotent love that is revealed in the life and death of Christ? This is adapted to change the lion into the lamb, it has done so in millions of cases, and

will do so on a universal scale, before the knell of this world's history shall be rung. "The lion shall lie down with the wolf," &c. Another thing which these verses strike us with is—

II. THE FORCE OF FAITH IN HUMAN LIFE. Whilst the whole of the chapter is a record of the triumphant force of faith, these verses contain also some special illustrations. The faith here, however, be it observed, is not faith in a proposition, but in a Person, and that person God. Faith in a person has more energizing power in the soul than faith in a proposition. What is the power this faith gave them? First, It was a power to *conquer enemies*. "Who through faith subdued kingdoms." What did Gideon do by faith? He destroyed the altars and groves of Baal, and with three hundred men routed a prodigious army of the Midianites. Barak—what did he do by faith? He battled with the army of Sisera, and won the deliverance of his country. Samson—what did he do by faith? Warred with the Philistines and achieved many signal victories. Jephthae—what did he by faith? Subdued the Ammonites and rescued his countrymen from their oppressive yoke. And David—what did he by faith? Conquered Moab, Ammon, Edom,

and Syria. Thus faith enabled the ancients to overcome their enemies, to stop the mouths of lions, quench fires, and enabled them to turn to flight the armies of the aliens. But faith in God gives men power to win higher victories over enemies than these. The faith of men in Christ has literally subdued kingdoms, and is destined to do so on a larger scale in the future. "All kings shall fall down before thee," &c.

Secondly: It was a power to *work out the right*. "Wrought righteousness." Faith in God enables a man to form right convictions of the right and to work out those convictions with an invincible determination.

Thirdly: It was a power to *realise the invisible*. "Obtained promises." What God told them should come, their faith made a present reality. "Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." Believing women when they saw their children massacred, realised their resurrection to life. "Women received their dead raised to life again." The widow of Sarepta, whose son was raised to life by Elijah, and the Shunammite who obtained the resurrection of her son by the hands of Elisha, perhaps are specially referred to here. But faith has power to bring the resurrection near

to every heart. It can enable us as we commit our children to the grave to see them alive on the other side.

Fourthly : It was a power to *endure the overwhelming*. Terrible beyond description as their sufferings were, it is said they would not "accept deliverance." They endured "cruel mockings and scourgings," "bonds," "imprisonment," "stonings," "sawing asunder," "slaying with the sword," "wandering about in sheep-skin," "destitute," "afflicted," tormented, rather than swerve an iota from their convictions, and thus dishonour their conscience and their God. Faith gives man a sublime power of endurance. Another thing which these verses strike us with is:—

III. THE CHARITY OF HEAVEN IN ITS TREATMENT OF CHARACTER. Not a man mentioned in this paragraph was perfect. Gedeon, Barak, Samson, Jephthae, David, and even Samuel, were all stained with sin. Falsehood, adultery, greed, cruelty, profanity, attached to most of them ; to some of them in a pre-eminent degree. Yet here there is no mention of their sins, they are put amongst the saints, they are canonized in the long roll of Heaven's illustrious heroes. The Great Father is more charitable in His treatment of human character than men are in the treatment of each other.

How quick we are to detect the faults of men, to magnify, parade, and trumpet them. In the estimation of men, one wrong act in the noblest and purest life exposes that life to excommunication from the sphere of virtuous men, and brings on it the execrations of contemporaries. It is not thus with Heaven : millions will be found in heaven whom bigots have consigned to hell. See how Christ treated sinners. The woman in Simon's house, the woman taken in adultery, the thief upon the cross, Saul of Tarsus, unbelieving Thomas, &c., &c. As a rule, the greatest sinner is the most censorious. He who has the "beam" in his own eye is the most quick to detect the "mote" in his brother's eye. He who has the most love is the most ready to overlook imperfections. "Brethren, if a brother be overtaken in a fault," &c., &c. Another thing which these verses strike us with is—

IV. THE UNWORTHINESS OF THE WORLD AS A SCENE FOR TRUE HEROES. "Of whom the world was not worthy." Observe—First : *The world's ideas of true heroes*. The world has never thought God's heroes worthy of their freedom, their enjoyments, and their life ; hence they have persecuted them even unto death. Even in this age true moral worth as such is not respected. If asso-

ciated with poverty it is ignored and shunned.

Secondly : *God's idea of the worthiness of the world.* It is not worthy to have true men on it. "To tell the great, the mighty, the wealthy, the rulers of the world, that they are not worthy the society of the poor, destitute, despised wanderers whom they hunt and persecute as the offscouring of all things, fills them with indignation. There is not an informer or apparitor but would think himself disparaged by it. But they may esteem it as they please. We know that this testimony is true, and the world shall one day confess it to be so."

Subject : THE HEBREWS AND EGYPTIANS AT THE RED SEA : A PICTURE OF MODERN MEN.

"By faith they passed through the Red Sea as by dry land : which the Egyptians assaying to do, were drowned."—Hebrews xi. 29.

A history of the wonderful fact recorded in these words is to be found in Exod. xiv. 19—31. (Sketch the incidents.)

The Hebrews and the Egyptians now at the Red Sea afford an illustration of all men, in relation to the common enterprise in which they are engaged, their successes and failures, and the reason of both. Observe :—

I. THEY WERE ALL EM-

BARKED IN A COMMON ENTERPRISE. Both assayed to cross the Red Sea. The hearts of both were set on this wonderful achievement. In this they resemble all men ; there is a common work in which all men, everywhere, are embarked. What is that? The *pursuit of happiness.* "Who will show us any good?" This is the deepest question in the heart of all, the spring that keeps the world in action. It is true they seek it in different directions ; some in sensual indulgence, some in worldly wealth, some in scenes of revelry and debauch, and some in spheres of mental culture and religion. All are trying to cross some Red Sea in its pursuit. They will brave the greatest dangers, and venture their all if haply they may find it. Observe :—

II. SOME SUCCEEDED AND SOME FAILED. The Hebrews "passed through the Red Sea as by dry land." They "went into the midst of the sea as on dry ground ; and the waters were a wall unto them on their right hand and on their left." But what of the Egyptians? "The Lord overthrew the Egyptians in the midst of the sea." The depths covered them, and they sank to the bottom as a stone.

In the common pursuit of happiness some men succeed ; they reach "a joy unspeak-

able and full of glory ; " they " rejoice, even in tribulation," &c., &c. But others fail : the vast majority signally fail ; they get engulfed in the sea of worldly anxieties, spiritual conflicts, moral remorse, and dread forebodings. Observe:—

III. FAITH EXPLAINS THE SUCCESS OF SOME AND THE FAILURE OF OTHERS. " By faith they passed through the Red Sea." Why did the Hebrews succeed ? They believed in God—in His love, power, and providence ; so believed, that they did what He commanded, although it clashed with their reason, their experience, and seemed to the last degree hazardous. " By faith they passed through the Red Sea." It was their faith that made them successful and triumphant. The Egyptians had no such faith. They went in their own strength, urged on by their ambition and their vengeance, and they failed.

Success in our pursuit of happiness can only be realised by faith in God. " He will keep them in perfect peace whose heart is stayed upon Him. He that believeth, and he only, can enter into the true rest. " It is certain," says Southey, " that all the evils in society arise from want of faith in God, and of obedience to His laws ; and it is no less certain that, by the prevalence of a lively and

efficient belief, they would all be cured."

" Never was a marvel done upon the earth, but it had sprung of faith ;

Nothing noble, generous, or great, but faith was the root of the achievement :

Nothing comely, nothing famous, but its praise is faith.

Leonidas fought in human faith, as Joshua in divine ;

Xenophon trusted to his skill, and the sons of Mattathias to their cause ;

In faith Columbus found a path across those untried waters.

The heroines of Arc and Sargossa fought in earthly faith :

Margaret by faith was valiant for her son, and Wallace mighty for his people ;

Faith in his reason made Socrates sublime, as faith in his science, Galileo :

Ambassadors in faith are bold, and unreprieved for boldness :

Faith urged Fabius to delays, and sent forth Hannibal to Cannæ ;

Cæsar at the Rubicon, Miltiades at Marathon, both were sped by faith." *Tupper.*

*Subject: REMONSTRANCE WITH
EVIL-DOERS.*

" And his father had not displeased him at any time in saying, Why hast thou done so ?"—1 Kings i. 6.

Adonijah was the fourth son of David by Haggith (2 Sam. iii. 4). On the death of his three brothers, Amnon, Chiliab, and Absalom, he became eldest son, and when his father's strength was visibly declining, put forth his

pretensions to the crown. The plot failed. Solomon was anointed and proclaimed, and Adonijah's intrigues and vanity ultimately proved his ruin. "He was a very godly man," but he did not "shew himself a worthy man." (1 Kings i. 6, 9, 25, 51—52; 1 Kings ii. 23—25.

The Spirit teaches us here that much of the evil that Adonijah did had its root in his early bad training, David, though a good man and a great king, sadly erred in his treatment of his children. What a sad glimpse do we get here of his domestic life! What is written is for our admonition. Learn:—

I. *That remonstrance with evil-doers is an imperative duty.*

"Why hast thou done so?" Thus should he have spoken. . . . "His father." None able to speak with such authority and tenderness. So others, according to their places and relationships. Hear God's call to arms, "Who will rise up for me against the evil-doers?"

II. *That remonstrance with evil-doers is a very difficult duty.*

"Displeased." Pride-hurt; carnal security disturbed; conscience roused to give pain. Danger of speaking harshly, of speaking the truth in wrath more than in love.

Still, must do what is right. Better offend men than God; better speak, than by silence imperil souls. Besides, if you act in time, you may gain your brother.

III. *That remonstrance with evil-doers is a much neglected duty.*

Here a father, and that father David, is charged with failure. Who then is safe? The very fact that the duty is so difficult and delicate, makes many shrink from it. They will not give pain. They fear the consequences of rebuke and discipline. But though the neglect of this duty is so common, this does not make the guilt the less. It is a sin against God, and a crime against your brother. Take heed; be warned by many fearful examples. Innocence is better than repentance. Better far to "displease" your children now, by kind and righteous correction, than to let them go on in sin without check, and in view of their sad fate and terrible upbraidings to cry, "Deliver me from blood-guiltiness, O Lord." Besides, how much higher a place will the father hold who rules as a king like Abraham (Gen. xviii. 19) than the man who weakly abuses his trust like Eli (1 Sam. iii. 13).

W. FORSYTH.

Pith of Renowned Sermons.

No. XXV.—HORACE BUSHNELL, D.D.

Subject: LIBERTY AND DISCIPLINE.

“As long as they have the bridegroom with them, they cannot fast. But the days will come, when the bridegroom shall be taken away from them, and then shall they fast in those days.”—Mark ii. 19, 20.

IT is one of the honourable distinctions of Christ's doctrine that He is never taken, as men are, with a half-truth concerning a subject. If there is, for example, a free element in Christian life and experience, and also a restrictive side, He comprehends both and holds them in a true adjustment of their offices and relations.

His answer to John's disciples amounts to this: When the love is full, and the soul is consciously gladdened by the present witness and felt impulse of God, restrictive or severely self-compelling discipline is uncalled for; but when there is a failure of such divine impulse, when the soul is losing ground, brought under by temptation, groping in dryness and obscurity, then some sharp revision of the life is urgently demanded, and must not be declined. In other words, let there be liberty in God while there may; girding up in ourselves, by forced exercise and discipline, when there must. Much the same truth is taught by Paul when he represents the Christian soul as a coin having two seals or mottoes on the two sides; on the face, “The Lord knoweth them that are His;” on the back, “Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.” Liberty and discipline, movement from God's centre, and movement from our own

sanctified inclination and self-compelling will, are the two great factors of Christian life and experience.

It is obvious that both these conceptions may be abused, as they always are when taken apart; but let us find now how to hold with Christ the two sides at once. There is then—

I. A ruling conception of the Christian life which is called having the bridegroom present; a state of right inclination established, in which the soul has immediate consciousness of God, and is swayed in liberty by His inspirations. The whole aim of Christianity is fulfilled in this alone. Discipline, self-regulation, carried on by the will, may be wanted; as I shall presently show. But no possible amount of such doings can make up a Christian virtue. Everything in Christianity goes for the free inclination. Here begins the true nobility of God's sons and daughters, when their inclination is wholly to good and to God. The bridegroom joy is now upon them, because their duty is become their festivity with Christ. What then—

II. Is the place or value of that whole side of self-discipline which Christ himself assumes the need of, when the bridegroom is to be taken away? There is, I undertake to say, one general purpose or office, in all doings of will, on the human side of Christian experience; viz., the ordering of the soul in fit position for God, that He may occupy it, have it in His power, sway it by His inspirations. No matter what the kind of doing to which we are called; self-government, self-renunciation, holy resolve, or steadfast waiting, the end is the same, the getting in position for God's occupancy. As the navigator of a ship does nothing for the voyage, save what he does by setting the ship to course and her sails to the wind, so our self-compelling discipline is to set us in the way of receiving the actuating impulse of God's will and character. All that we can do is summed up in self-presentation to God. hence the call to salvation is, "Come." And as it is in conversion, so is it of all Christian doings afterward. If, by reason of a still partial subjection to evil, the nuptial day of a soul's liberty be succeeded by a void, dry state, the disciple

has it given him to prepare himself for God's help by clearing away his idols, rectifying his misjudgments, staying his resentments and grudges, and mortifying his appetites. There will be a certain violence in the fight of his repentances. "For behold what carefulness it wrought in you; yea, what clearing of yourselves; yea, what indignation; yea, what fear; yea, what vehement desire; yea, what zeal; yea, what revenge." Let none object that all such strains of endeavour must be without merit because they are, in one sense, without inclination. Holy Scripture commands us to serve, when we cannot reign. Do we "mortify our members," "pluck out our right eye," by *inclination*? Let us specify some humbler matters in which it must be done.

1. How great a thing for a Christian to keep life, practice, and business in the terms of order.

2. A responsible way has the same kind of value; a soul that stays fast in concern for the church, for the salvation of men, for the good of the country, is ready for God's best inspirations.

3. Openness and boldness for God is an absolute requisite for the effective revelation of God in the soul.

4. Honesty, not merely commercial, but honesty engaging to do justice everywhere, every way, every day, and specially to God's high truth and God.

I could speak of yet humbler things; such as dress and society. These are commonly put outside the pale of religious responsibility. And yet there is how much in them to fix the soul's position towards God!

But what of fasting? the very thing about which my text is concerned. Does it belong to Christianity? I think so. Christ declared that His disciples should fast when He was gone, He began His great ministry by a protracted fast, and He discourses of it just as He does of prayer and alms. A certain half-illuminated declamation against asceticism is a great mistake of our time. An asceticism belonging to Christianity is described when an apostle says, "I exercise myself" (*ασχω*), "to have a conscience void of offence." Accepting

this good asceticism, if we find that our body is getting uppermost, our Sundays choked, our great sentiments stifled by indulgence of the body, we shall turn upon it and say with a meaning, "I keep under my body." If we cannot find how to bear an enemy, if we recoil from sacrifices laid upon us, we shall emulate the example of Cromwell's soldiers, who conquered first in the impassive state, by fasting and prayer, and then sailing into battle as men iron-clad, conquered their enemies; or those martyrs who could sing in the crisp of their bodies because they had trained them to serve.

But none should ever go into a fast, when he has the bridegroom consciously with him, and it must never amount to a maceration of the body—never be more frequent than is necessary to maintain, for the long run of time, the clearest, healthiest condition of mind and body.

Brethren, there ought to be a fascination in the severities of this rugged discipline. Our modern piety, we feel, wants depth and richness, and it cannot be otherwise, unless we consent to endure some hardness. To be merely wooed by grace, and tenderly dewed by sentiment, makes a Christian mushroom, not a Christian man. So much meaning has our Master, when charging it upon us, again and again, without our once conceiving possibly what depth of meaning He would have us find in His words: "Deny thyself, take up thy cross and follow me."

Camberwell.

W. H.

DIFFICULTY ENGENDERS GREATNESS.—"Another source of greatness is difficulty. When any work seems to have required immense force and labour to effect it, the idea is grand. Stonehenge, neither for disposition nor ornament, has anything admirable; but those huge rude masses of stone, set on end and piled on each other, turn the mind on the immense force necessary for such a work. Nay, the rudeness of the work increases this cause of grandeur, as it excludes the idea of art and contrivance; for dexterity produces another sort of effect, which is different enough from this."—*Burke.*

Seeds of Sermons from the Minor Prophets.

If the Bible as a whole is inspired, it is of vast importance that all its Divine ideas should be brought to bear upon the living world of men. Though the pulpit is the organ Divinely intended for this work, it has been doing it hitherto in a miserably partial and restricted method. It selects isolated passages, and leaves whole chapters and books for the most part untouched. Its conduct to the Minor Prophets may be taken as a case in point. How seldom are they resorted to for texts, and yet they abound with splendid passages throbbing with Divine ideas. It is our purpose to go through this section of the Holy Word; selecting, however, only such verses in each chapter and book as seem the most suggestive of truths, of the most vital interest, and universal application.

We begin with HOSEA. The remembrance of some facts connected with this man will greatly help us in our endeavours to reach the meaning and feel the power of certain of his utterances. He was a native of Israel, and lived in Samaria about 700 or 800 years B.C. His prophecy seems to have embraced a period of about 60 years, from Jeroboam's death to Hezekiah's ascension to the throne. He was contemporary with Isaiah, and preceded Joel, Jonah, and Amos. His prophecies are directed almost exclusively to the ten tribes who had sunk into the deepest idolatry. His style, as a writer, is very peculiar. "It is," says De Witte, "abrupt, unrounded, and ebullient, his rhythm hard leaping and violent." Like a bee he has been said to fly from one flower to another, to suck the honey from all the blossoms.

HOSEA.

No. XIII.

Subject: MAN GOD-WARD, AND
GOD MAN-WARD.

"Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the Lord: his going forth is prepared as the morning; and he shall come unto us as the rain, as the latter and former rain unto the earth."—Hosea vi. 3.

"Let us therefore know—hunt after the knowledge of Jehovah; His rising is fixed like the morning dawn, that He may come to us like rain, and moisten the earth like the latter rain."—*Kiel and Delitzsch*. There are two pursuits in this passage, man pursuing God, "following on to know Him," and God as a consequence pursuing men. "He shall come

unto us as the rain." Observe—

I. MAN IN A GOD-WARD DIRECTION. "Then shall we know if we follow on to know the Lord." The particle *if* is not in the original, although it is certain that a knowledge of Jehovah depends on searching after it. Two things are here implied.

First: That a knowledge of God is the essence of spiritual goodness. This is clear from reason, and is everywhere taught in the Bible. By a knowledge of Him, however, we do not mean a scientific acquaintance with His attributes, relations, and works, but a *sympathetic* experience, an experience of those sentiments of justice, truthfulness, love, and mercy, which are the

inspiration, the moral life of God Himself. Philosophically, we can only know a man as we sympathise with the leading principles of the man's heart; and it is only thus we can know God.

Secondly: That a knowledge of God can *only be attained by earnest searching*. We shall know if we "follow on," if we "hunt after." Intellectually, whatever may be the amount of earnest searching we shall never know Him. "Who by searching can find out God?" But with the heart we may know Him whom to know is "life eternal." Every day by study we may get new ideas of Him, every day we may translate those ideas into emotions, and every day we may cherish those emotions into dominant forces of the soul. All this requires the most resolute and persistent effort. Observe:

II. GOD IN A MAN-WARD DIRECTION. The man who goes forth in search of a heart acquaintance with Jehovah will meet with Him in the way. "His (that is, Jehovah's) going forth is prepared as the morning." God comes forth to all men, but He comes forth in a special way to all those who are pressing after an acquaintance with Himself.

First: He comes to them full of *promise*. "As the morning." What a delightful season is the morning: it rings the knell of the dark night, and heralds the beauties and brightness of the coming day! How the sufferer in his midnight agonies, the mariner in his nocturnal tempest, hail the first grey

beams of the morning! The night of guilt and dark foreboding is broken by the morning of God's manifestations of love. We could not bear God to come to us as the high noon, His effulgence would burn us up, hence He comes as the morning.

Secondly: He comes to them full of *refreshing influence*. "He shall come unto us as the rain." What a glorious change seasonable showers produce on the parched earth, they touch every part into life and beauty. Such is the influence of God upon the heart of the devout inquirer.

CONCLUSION. How sublime the destiny of the truly good man! He goes forth in search of a knowledge, not of the creation, but of the Creator Himself; and the Creator appears to Him full of the promise of the morning and of the influence of refreshing showers. What is the world to Him? Whilst worldly men

"Things terrestrial worship as divine,
His hopes immortal blow them by, as dust
That dims his sight, and shortens his survey,
Which longs, in infinite, to lose all bounds."

Dr. Young.

NO. XIV.

Subject: A THREE-FOLD THEME.

"O Ephraim, what shall I do unto thee? O Judah, what shall I do unto thee? for your goodness is as a morning cloud, and as the early dew it goeth away."—Hosea vi. 4.

"What shall I do to thee, O Ephraim!
 What shall I do to thee, O Judah!
 For your goodness is like the morning cloud,
 And like the dew which early departeth."

Henderson.

Here we have a three-fold theme of thought.

I. DIVINE SOLICITUDE. Here the Infinite condescends to speak after the manner of men, that men may appreciate Him. The language seems to imply,

First: *I have done much for thee.* It has the sound of another utterance, "What more could I have done to my vineyard that has not been done in it?" Isaiah v. 4. God had done much for Ephraim and Judah. He had given them emancipators, law-givers, priests, prophets, granted to them for ages many signal and merciful manifestations of Himself. The language seems to imply, Secondly: *I am ready to do more.* My heart overflows with compassion. Your rebellions and your iniquities have not exhausted my love. I am still ready to show you mercy. The language seems to imply, Thirdly: *I am fettered in my actions.* I know not what to do, I am nonplussed. The Infinite has limits of action, Almightyness has restrictions. All things are not possible with God. It is not possible for Him to tell a lie, it is not possible for Him to be immoral, it is not possible for Him to make moral intelligences virtuous and happy contrary to their will. Christ said to the men of Jerusalem, "I would but ye

would not." "What shall I do?" What wonderful language this for the Infinite to employ! His incapacity at this point is His glory. It is His glory that He will not outrage moral minds. Here we have

II. HUMAN PERVERSITY. The right answer to this appeal, "What shall I do unto thee?" would have been, "Whatever Thou wilt, Lord." "Not our will but Thine be done." We cordially submit to Thy authority, we loyally acquiesce in Thy arrangements, we lovingly yield to Thy operations. This is the language of Heaven, hence God knows no restrictions in His operations there; all go with Him, and He pours forth His love freely and without restraint. On earth it is not so. Men set their wills in hostility to His. Their language is, We will not have Thee to reign over us. They are rebels, and will not lay down their arms of hostility and become loyal subjects, hence they must be crushed; they are diseased, and will not accept the means He has prescribed for their restoration; they are captives, and will not leave their cells though He has thrown their doors wide open; they are paupers dying of starvation, but will not take from Him the Bread of Life which He offers to them without money and without price. Hence He says, "What shall I do unto thee?" I can reverse the laws of nature, I can break up old universes and create new ones, but I cannot make beings whom I have endowed with the power of freedom virtuous and happy,

contrary to their own will.
 "Why will ye die?" Here we have—

III. EVANESCENT GOODNESS.
 "Your goodness is as a morning cloud, and as the early dew it goeth away." Whether the goodness here refers exclusively to human kindness or includes some amount of pious sentiment it matters not; it was so evanescent that it was of no worth. It was like the cloud, empty, fickle, disappointing. When it appeared first, men thought it had in it the refreshing element, and they expected a shower to come down on the parched earth, but a gust of wind came and swept it out of sight. Like the "early dew" it sparkles as diamonds on the greensward for a short hour, but is soon exhaled by the summer beams. Evanescent goodness is worthless. Most men have some amount of goodness in them which continues for a time and then passes away. Goodness is of no worth to any being until it becomes *supreme* and *permanent*.

CONCLUSION. Thank God for endowing thee with freedom; it is a fearful power. It gives to men a widely different destiny even here.

"From the same cradle's side,
 From the same mother's knee,
 One to long darkness and the
 frozen tide,
 One to the peaceful sea!"

But a destiny in eternity infinitely more dissimilar. It leads some to God's heights of blessedness, others to the deepest depths of perdition.

No. XV.

Subject: RIGHTEOUSNESS AND RITUALISM.

"For I desired mercy, and not sacrifice: and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings."—Hosea vi. 6.

We shall take "mercy" and "knowledge of God" here as including spiritual excellence, and "sacrifice" and "burnt-offerings" as representing religious ritualism; and the idea is that Jehovah desires from man one rather than the other. The same idea is given in the following passages:—"Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt-offerings and sacrifices as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams" (1 Sam. xv. 22; Matt. xii. 7). "What doth the Lord require of thee but to do justly and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" (Micah vi. 8). "Go ye and learn what that meaneth, I will have mercy and not sacrifice; for I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance" (Matt. ix. 13). "To do justice and judgment is more acceptable to the Lord than sacrifice" (Prov. xxi. 3). "To love him with all the heart and with all the strength, and to love his neighbour as himself, is more than all whole burnt-offerings and sacrifices" (Mark xii. 33).

Why is moral righteousness preferable to religious ritualism?

I. BECAUSE RITUALISM AT ITS BEST APART FROM RIGHTEOUSNESS IS WORTHLESS. We are not of those who thunder unqualified denunciations at all

rites and ceremonies in connection with religion. Principles to show themselves must always have forms, and we would have the forms ever the most graceful and appropriate. Science is the ritual of the philosophic, art is the ritual of the æsthetic, tuneful verse is the ritual of poetry. Nature is the ritual of God; through its countless forms of life and beauty His invisible things reveal themselves. But ritualism, in connection with the religion of man, must be the *effect*, the *expression*, and the *medium* of inner righteousness. Without "mercy" and the "knowledge of God" in the soul all ritual observances are as worthless and as revolting as the motions of a galvanised corpse. "Bring no more vain oblations: incense is an abomination unto me; the new moons and sabbaths, the calling of assemblies, I cannot away with: it is iniquity, even the solemn meeting. Your new moons and your appointed feasts my soul hateth: they are a trouble unto me; I am weary to bear them. And when ye spread forth your hands I will hide mine eyes from you; yea, when ye make many prayers I will not hear" (Isaiah i. 13—15).

II. BECAUSE RIGHTEOUSNESS APART FROM THE BEST RITUALISM IS ABSOLUTELY VALUABLE. Spiritual excellence, whether it shows itself or not, is essentially good; it is God-like. Like electricity in the material system, it is the subtle element which binds the moral universe into unity and tunes it into music. Ritualism, at its best, has only a *circumstantial*, *local*, and *tem-*

porary worth, but the value of spiritual excellence is *absolute*, *universal*, and *eternal*.

CONCLUSION. Beware of mere formality in religious worship.

"A man may cry 'Church! church!' at every word,
With no more piety than other people,—
A daw 's not reckoned a religious bird
Because it keeps a-cawing from a steeple:
The temple is a good, a holy place,
But quacking only gives it an ill savour,
While saintly mountebanks the porch disgrace,
And bring religious self into disfavour."

Thomas Hood.

NO. XVI.

Subject: DIVINE INSTITUTIONS CORRUPTED.

"Gilead is a city of them that work iniquity, and is polluted with blood."—Hosea vi. 8.

It is supposed that Gilead here means Ramoth Gilead: the metropolis of the mountainous region beyond Jordan and south of the river Jabbok, known by the name of Gilead (Joshua xxi. 28; 1 Kings iv. 18). It was here that Jacob and Laban entered into a sacred covenant with each other. It was once a very sacred place: it was one of the celebrated cities of refuge (Deut. xx. 23; Joshua xxiii. 28). The place, which was once a city of refuge, an institution of the God of heaven, had now been desecrated by wicked men, and become the scene of "iniquity" and "blood."

Observe two things—

I. That divine institutions, specially designed for man's good, ARE OFTEN CORRUPTED BY HIM. Gilead, as a city of refuge, was of divine ordinance, designed for special good. It was set apart for protecting men from the injustice of being put to death as murderers where the motive to murder did not exist, and thus preventing the shedding of innocent blood. But this very place for justice had now become the scene to "work iniquity," the place of mercy the scene that was now "polluted with blood." Thus men may—nay, they have done and still do—corrupt God's special ordinances for good. We say special ordinances, for all God's ordinances are for good. Whilst all places on earth are for the good of man, Gilead had a specific appointment. (1) The *Bible* is a special ordinance of God for good. Men have corrupted that. They do so sometimes by denying its truth altogether, but oftener by perverting its doctrines. (2) The *gospel ministry* is a special ordinance of God for good. From the beginning almost God set apart men for the special work of indoctrinating their fellow-men with the principles of everlasting rectitude and the doctrines of redemptive mercy — prophets, apostles, evangelists, pastors, &c. But men have sadly corrupted this divine institution; few things on earth have been more corrupted by man than the ministry.

II. That divine institutions specially designed for man's

good, when corrupted BECOME THE WORST OF ALL EVILS. Holy Gilead, once the scene of divine mercy, was now filled with "iniquity" and "blood."

(1) A corrupted *Bible* is the worst of all books. It does more mischief than any infidel productions. Political tyrannies, slaveries, wars, persecutions, have all been sanctioned and encouraged by a corrupted Bible. Alas! the millions of Christendom hate the Bible—not the Bible that God gave, but man's corrupted version of that Bible. (2) A corrupted *pulpit* is the worst of all ministries. Popes, archbishops, bishops, and the clergy in every grade in all churches, have been found amongst the most intolerant despots and the most bloody persecutors of all times. They consecrate the banners of the warriors, they advocate the cause of slavery, they have ever been the prime obstructors to the promotion of liberty and the advancement of the universal rights of man. An old expositor has said, "the clergy, when wicked, are the worst of all men; none so cruel and bloody." It is time for the people to be taught that a pulpit is not necessarily a Christian or a useful thing. It may be, alas! it sometimes is, the corruptest and the most pernicious thing in the neighbourhood in which it has a place. A man is not a saint because he calls himself a Christian. A building is not the "House of God" because it is called a church, a chapel, or a tabernacle; a forum is not sacred to the utterance of gospel truth because it is called a

pulpit. Things called "sermons" may sometimes have more wickedness in them than infidel tracts; places called the "houses of God" may sometimes serve more effectually the cause of the devil than the theatres of pleasure-seekers or lecture-halls of sceptics. Mere names must

not rule our judgment. It is the policy of the devil in these days to baptize his instruments with Christian titles. He is never more powerful than when he occupies the sacred desk, writes religious books, and quotes the word of God. There are wolves in sheep's clothing, and false prophets now as ever.

The Pulpit and its Handmaids.

ORIGINAL SIMILITUDES.

TALK.—"As a rule, where you have the most talk you have the least soul. Just as with the tree where foliage abounds fruit is scarce, and as useless flowers and noxious weeds impoverish a soil capable of producing trees richly clustered with choicest fruit, so idle talk wastes those powers of the soul fitted for achievements fraught with blessings to mankind."

DEEDS.—"Good feelings are very well in their place, and good ideas too; but if they take not the form of deeds, they are only as clouds without water, as the sap of the fruit tree running off in leafage and flower."

SOCIAL UNITY.—"The divine idea of humanity seems to be this, that all souls should have a common centre, and that in all their revolutions, their social radiations, borrowed from a common source, should genially and harmoniously blend, intermingle, and combine."

TRIALS HEART-REVEALING.—"Severe trials, especially those which powerfully threaten life, are sure to develop the moral dispositions of men; they reveal the state of the heart, they take off the mask, and show us to ourselves and the universe; they test our principles, too, as fire tries the minerals."

GOOD AND EVIL.—"When the whole history of our race is complete, it may appear that all the evils of our world, as compared with the good, are but as one jarring note in an endless anthem of joy, one cloudy hour in the sunshine of ages."

POETRY.—"This material universe is but spirit in costume—'a vesture;' its myriads of objects are but eternal thoughts run into palpable forms. Imagination with her keen eyes looks through the garb, sees the divine ideas, moulds them into shapes of her own, and clothes them in an airy fabric of her own weaving."

THE WORLD AND THE SOUL.—"Man has no universe worth mentioning but that which comes reflected from the mirror of his own spirit. God hath indeed put 'the world in a man's heart.'"

THE POINT FROM WHICH TO SEE MERCY.—"If you would see the glorious stars in the day-time, you must descend into some dark pit, and looking up you will behold the firmament brilliant with innumerable orbs; so if you would behold the wonderfulness of God's love in the gospel, you must descend into the dark chamber of your corrupt heart, and then glancing upward you will catch a view of its glowing splendours."

THE POWER OF LOVE.—"The being we love supremely we keep close to our hearts. Friends separated by continents, oceans, and even death, love brings near. It is not logic, but love that makes us feel the Infinite a God not afar off."

LOVE FILLS THE HEART.—"Where God is loved there is no room for other deities."

MENTAL ASSOCIATION.—"There is a mysterious and solemn power in the mind to invest the simplest object with which we have been in conscious contact, such as a flower, a stone, a tree, with an energy to wake up within us the remembrance of things that have long passed away. We impart something of ourselves to every object with which we are brought into conscious contact—something that will speak to our memories for ever—a kind of archangel's trumpet to wake

the buried thoughts. What has once impressed us will always have the wand of a magician."

THE VISIBLE AND THE INVISIBLE.—"It is always true that the invisible is greater than the visible. The visible universe is great. I stand upon some lofty summit of nature, from which I discover stretching around me immense tracts of sea and land, assuming aspects of grandeur well-nigh overwhelming, but I know that the whole of this vast area is but a spot compared to the mighty regions that lie beyond. But what is the globe itself to the visible universe—a leaf in the forest, a sand on ocean's shore. Yet the whole is nothing to the invisible, the mighty universe of mind."

CHRIST.—"What are we to the universe? What is the universe to Him (Christ)? His will is the volition of Infinite love—love working to bless universal being with its own exhaustless treasures. The deepest suffering of some of His creatures are but the bass notes in the ever-swelling music of His happy creation."

FOLLOWING CHRIST IN TRIAL.—"As the ocean follows the moon, even when the heavens frown on it, and the winds lash it into fury, so let our souls evermore follow the Divine will, even in our greatest trials. And then the hour will come when we shall find ourselves rolling on the serener shores of a clime glowing in the sun, and disporting in the breath of Infinite Love."

TRUTH AND ERROR.—"Error only lives as it is wrapped in

artificial clothes and sheltered in artificial tents, but truth, like seed in a genial soil, weaves its own costumes and builds up structures for itself."

THE POWER OF THE CROSS.—"Like the force which links the floating atom to the sun, the cross, the blessed cross binds my poor spirit to the heart of God."

ATHEISM.—"Atheistic systems, if systems they be called, are the production of fear. As Adam and Eve used the trees in the garden, so atheists use their thoughts to shut out God. Their work has ever been to plant in the wilderness of our sinful life, thought-trees, whose thick and well-foliaged branches shall conceal their Maker from the eyes of men."

THE INFLUENCE OF ACTIONS.—"No solitary act terminates with its performance. Each act is a seed that shall multiply its own kind for ever; a drop which colours and swells the stream of an everlasting existence; an impulse that will never expend its force, but shall tell on the ages of an interminable future."

INFLUENCE.—"Created nature as a whole is a vast concatenation, of which every atom is a link. The roll of the infant's marble shakes the massive globes of space, and in the moral realm the breath of an infant soul may reach the heart of the most distant seraph."

HAPPINESS.—"Human happiness is a plant that springs from one germ, a stream that issues from one fount. It is harmony of soul. A happy

mind must be a mind in harmony with itself, the universe, and God."

A DREAM.—"Great God! All about me seems fiction. Men are full of dreams. They dream because they morally sleep. Would that some voice from the heavens above, or from the abysses below, would speak in tones of thunder to this age, that men may wake, shake off their vain dreams, and seize the true ideas of life and God."

A TRUE THOUGHT.—"As the morning breeze sweeps the mountains of their mist, a true thought will sweep the soul of its vanities."

THE PURE HEART.—"Sure as the crystal stream mirrors the shining orbs of the sky, the pure heart will reflect to the eye of intellect the truths of God."

VAIN THOUGHTS.—"A man full of vain thoughts is like the somnambulist walking on the craggy cliffs, or the drunkard staggering amidst coal-pits—every step is perilous."

MAN'S FALL.—"Humanity is in a sad condition. It was a vessel built at first to navigate the sea of life, with truth for its guiding-star and heaven for its destination, but is now lying in ruins amidst rocks and sands. It was once a temple reared for the residence and worship of the everlasting, but its walls are broken down, its magnificent columns are in ruins. But, man! though thou art a temple in ruins, thou shalt be rebuilt, and the glory of the Lord shall irradiate every chamber of thy being: though,

bruised and mangled by the fall, the Great Physician will heal thee, and thou shalt become hale in body and jubilant in soul. Though dead and thy dry bones lie strewn in the valley of sin and bleached

by the winds, He Who 'is the resurrection and the life' shall restore thee. At His bidding the breath will come from the four winds, and thou shalt stand up to serve the God of Israel."

Homiletical Breviaries.

LVIII.

Subject: THE UNIVERSE WON BY SELF-CONQUEST.

"He that overcometh shall inherit all things."—Revelations xxi. 7.

The subject of the text is self-conquest, and we have it here in two aspects. I. As the GRAND WORK OF MAN. "He that overcometh." What is it to overcome self? A man may overcome others by violence, overcome difficulties in his secular pursuits, overcome the forces of nature so as to make them subserve his will and yet not overcome himself. Self-conquest includes at least two things: (1) The subordination of the body to the soul. The great crime and curse of the world consist in the sovereignty of the body. Because the body rules, man is the slave of the senses and lower impulses, and the soul is carnally sold under sin. (2) The subordination of the soul to sympathy with God. The soul may rule the body, but it may rule it for selfish, sceptical, and ambitious ends. Such a rule of soul would not be self-conquest. The soul should be ruled by sympathy with God, sympathy with His character, His operations, His plans. In these two things, we maintain, self-conquest consists, and such conquests require battling—resolute, brave, persistent, invincible battling. We have self-conquest here.—II. As WINNING THE UNIVERSE. "He that overcometh shall inherit all things." "All things"—no limitation. "All things are yours," &c.

The millions of men who live in the universe do not inherit it; it inherits, possesses them, plays with them, uses them, absorbs them. But the man who has conquered himself comes under the control of sympathy with the great God—inherits all things, gets the universe. (1) Gets the *whole* of it. He penetrates its meaning, appropriates its truths, admires its beauties, drinks in its poetry, revels in its spirit, exults in its God, and says "the Lord is my portion." (2) He gets the whole of it *for ever*. It is his to enjoy for ever.

LIX.

Subject : GOOD MEN IN DIFFICULTIES.

"And they said among themselves, Who shall roll us away the stone from the door of the sepulchre? And when they looked, they saw that the stone was rolled away: for it was very great."—Mark xvi. 3, 4.

Who were the men who "said among themselves"? They were the special friends of Jesus. "They bought sweet spices that they might come and anoint him." Here we have two things: I. GOOD MEN IN CONSCIOUS CONTACT WITH DIFFICULTIES. They had come to anoint His blessed body, but that body was shut up in a sepulchre, and on that sepulchre was a stone which no human hand could lift. There are imaginary difficulties in life as well as real ones. Nerveless and slothful spirits see difficulties everywhere, there are always thorns in their hedge or lions in their path, but here is a real difficulty, and good men are often in conscious contact with such. They are often brought to a standstill and know not what to do, like the children of Israel when fronting the roaring billows of the Red Sea with piled mountains on either side and Pharaoh and his host in the rear. Difficulties are disciplinary, they stimulate effort and deepen our sense of dependence on Almightyness, hence they lie thickly on our path. Here we have—II. A MERCIFUL HEAVEN GRACIOUSLY INTERPOSING ON THEIR BEHALF. As they felt the difficulty pressing on their hearts, and exclaimed, "Who shall roll away the stone?" they looked, and behold the "stone was rolled away." Ever through the ages it is true that man's extremity is God's opportunity. As Moses the leader of Israel stood on the shores of the Red Sea, in the height of his extremity Heaven interposed and cut a highway through

the sea. Daniel was thrust into the den of the ravenous beasts. How great his extremity! But Heaven interposes and shuts the "lions' mouths." And thus it has ever been. The old promise has never failed, "When thou passest through the waters I will be with thee, and through the rivers they shall not overflow thee; when thou walkest through the fire thou shalt not be burned, neither shall the flames kindle upon thee."

No. LX.

Subject: THE SINNER'S HEDGES.

"He hath hedged me about that I cannot get out."—Lamentations iii. 7.

God has built hedges around sinners in this life, He has put such restraints on them that they cannot do what is in their evil hearts to accomplish. I. There is the "hedge" of MORAL SENSE. Conscience shuts the sinner in and prevents him from a full development of all the wicked passions and impulses of his nature. It is very true that in some cases the reins of conscience are so weak and elastic that they allow the fiery steed of evil to bound very far, still in most cases they are strong enough to keep it within some limits. Thank God for this hedge! II. There is the "hedge" OF SOCIAL LIFE. (1) There is the hedge of social *relationship*. How many sinners are held in by the influence of father, mother, brother, sister! (2) There is the hedge of social *sentiment*. In a morally enlightened age like ours, public sentiment is strong against wrong, and most men stand in awe of public sympathy. III. There is the hedge of PERSONAL INCAPACITY. (1) The want of *physical health* is a hedge. Many men would do far more mischief were they not so physically frail. (2) The want of *intellectual ability* is a hedge. Many men would swindle on a large scale, propagate infidelity by their writings and their oratory, had they the ability. (3) The want of *secular means* is a hedge. Poverty is a hedge, broad and high, preventing man from doing enormous mischief. Were there not so much incapacity and poverty the world would abound with Alexanders, Cæsars, and Napoleons. Thank God for these hedges!

No. LXI.

Subject: GENUINE CONVERSION.

"Turn thou us unto thee, O Lord, and we shall be turned; renew our days as of old."—Lamentations v. 21.

The Bible abounds with passages showing the nature of conversion and its transcendent importance, but it has few which give a more simple view of its real nature than the text. It teaches—I. That it is a turning of the soul to the Lord. "Turn thou us unto thee, O Lord." It is a turning of the soul not to *creeds*, not to *churches*, but to the Lord Himself, and a turning to Him as the Object of supreme love. It is the centring of the whole soul upon Him. If the Lord is loved supremely, He will be the dominant subject of thought, the leading theme of conversation, the paramount sovereign of life. It teaches—II. That it is a turning of the soul to the Lord BY the Lord. "Turn *thou* us unto thee, O Lord." No one can turn the human soul to God but Himself. A man may as well endeavour to roll back the Mississippi to its mountain springs as to turn back the soul to the Lord; He alone can do it, and He does it by the influence of nature, historic events, gospel truths, and Christly ministries.

Literary Notices.

[We hold it to be the duty of an Editor either to give an early notice of the books sent to him for remark, or to return them at once to the Publisher. It is unjust to praise worthless books; it is robbery to retain unnoticed ones.]

THE REVIEWER'S CANON.

In every work regard the author's end,
Since none can compass more than they intend.

WONDERS OF WATER. From the French of GASTON TISSANDIER. English revised by ROBERT STAWELL BALL, LL.D. Cassell, Petter, and Galpin, London, Paris, and New York.

THIS is a volume much to our taste, and full of interest and instruction. It consists of five books,—the first includes chapters on the extent, depth, colour, temperature, superficial agitation, tides, currents, and struggles

of the ocean against land. The second includes three chapters on the journeys, the vapours, fogs, clouds, condensation of vapour, rain, snow, dews, rivers, shores and floating islands, colour of river water, and subterranean circulation. The third, which is on the action of water on continents, includes chapters on currents, torrents, floating ice, waterfalls, cascades, inundations, petrifying fountains, and still waters. The fourth book is on the composition of water, and has five chapters on the laboratory, the analysis and synthesis, the action of heat, the influence of cold, solid water, and chemical properties. The fifth book is on the uses of water, and includes irrigation and drainage, warping, mineral waters, fresh and sea water baths, cold water cure, artificial mineral waters, artesian wells. All these subjects are treated in a very condensed yet comprehensive style. The illustrations are numerous and striking. We heartily recommend the work.

THE PERFECT LIFE. IN TWELVE DISCOURSES. By WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING, D.D. Edited from his MSS. by his nephew William Henry Channing. London: Williams and Norgate, Covent Garden.

THE subjects in this volume are, "The Religious Principle in Human Nature," "God revealed in the Universe and in Humanity," "The Universal Father," "The Father's Love for Persons," "Trust in the Living God," "Life a Divine Gift," "The True End of Life," "The Perfecting Power of Religion," "Jesus Christ the Brother, Friend, and Saviour," "The Essence of the Christian Religion," "Perfect Life the End of Christianity," "The Church Universal." The other works of Dr. Channing's we read in our youthhood; they charmed us then, they struck an inspiration into our young hearts, and helped, we have no doubt, to stimulate our thoughts and to fashion our style. Though he has not said all connected with the personal work of Christ which we tenaciously hold as true and vital, what he has said on this sublime theme has never been said by uninspired man in language more lofty and soul-inspiring. And then who has ever handled great social and ethical questions with such breadth of thought, glowing philanthropy, religious reverence, and literary ability? His thoughts are everywhere penetrating as the light, his sympathies glowing as the summer's sun, his style clear and flowing as the crystal stream, and fresh as the morning dew. Robertson of Brighton read him, studied him, and was to some extent fashioned by him. Great as was the confessedly great Robertson, he can scarcely be said to have towered higher or dived deeper than Channing. Though the discourses before us are posthumous, and perhaps were never intended by the author for publication, they bear the impress of his great mind, and glow and sparkle with his genius.

ROUGH NOTES ON LITURGIES. By the author of "Public Prayer."
London : W. Mackintosh, 24, Paternoster Row.

THE anonymous author of this little book here deals in a very vigorous and independent way with the question of Liturgies. The author refers to some discussion that has been going on in a religious newspaper called the "English Independent." He ably grapples with the popular objections brought against the use of Liturgies. He handles some of the anti-Liturgists with a power which shows that he could strike them with dumbness on the subject if he chose. Some men write against Liturgies who are almost in utter ignorance of the subject, some from stupid prejudice, and some from vested interest. The Nonconformist minister who does not see the necessity of doing something to improve the present forms of worship in dissenting chapels is certainly not up to the times, and not entitled to be ranked amongst the spiritual leaders of men. The most formal things we know of are most of what are called extemporaneous prayers in Nonconformist chapels : they are prosaic, dull, often somnific and irreverent to the last degree. Preachers may like their dull utterances which they call prayers, but people everywhere are crying out for a higher style of public devotion. To those who wish to understand the question we heartily commend this little volume.

SKETCHES OF REMARKABLE PEOPLE, &c. By SPENCER T. HALL,
Ph.D., M.D., M.A. Simpkin, Marshall, and Co.

THIS is chiefly a collection of personal recollections of celebrated characters, by the well-known "Sherwood Forester."

A man's literary powers may be of an inferior order, yet if he has been accustomed to associate with persons of eminence, and will but faithfully describe their manners and habits, he may produce a most interesting book. People so much enjoy a glimpse into the private life of public personages. But Dr. Spencer Hall has not only been thrown a good deal, during a long literary and scientific career, into the society of those whom the world is seldom weary of hearing about—he also relates with marked ability what he has to say about them. Their appearance, their manners, their conversation are, in his volume, delineated with peculiar fidelity and force. The book contains personal reminiscences of (among other celebrities) Cobbett, Professor Wilson, Ebenezer Elliott, Dr. Thos. Dick, Miss Mitford, Jas. Montgomery, Bernard Barton, and Robert Owen ; also biographical sketches of illustrious men and women, in addition to those whose acquaintance the author has enjoyed ; likewise a reprint of articles on miscellaneous topics, all worthy of publication in this collected form. Finally, the volume contains some very pleasing poems. Altogether

the book is a most interesting one. Dr. Hall always writes gracefully and effectively. In both his prose and his verse he shows himself to be an ardent lover of nature, and, what is better, an ardent lover of man.

THE LORD'S SUPPER NO MYSTERY. A Sermon by Rev. SAMUEL MINTON, M.A. London : Elliot Stock, 62, Paternoster Row.

MR. MINTON is one of the ablest clergymen in the Church of England. He does not allow his manhood to sink in his office. He is strong enough to break away at times from the circle of ideas peculiar to his class, and man enough to do unconventional things when duty calls. There are but few abler controversialists than he : we have no wish to meet him as an opponent. He searches one's propositions most rigorously, and he strikes at the detected error without mercy or mistake. Those who wish to see what the Lord's Supper really is when stripped of all the mystery with which priests and ecclesiastics have invested it should read this little pamphlet.

OAKLANDS PULPIT. PART I. London : Elliot Stock, 62, Paternoster Row.

WE have already passed our judgment on the "Oaklands Pulpit." We are glad to receive another and a larger number containing articles on the following subjects : "Divine and Human Co-operation," "Juvenile Delinquents," "The Converted Nobleman," "Characters contrasted," "Leaf and Flower-buds." We trust this pulpit will live and flourish.

THE PRACTICAL PHILOSOPHER : A DAILY MONITOR FOR THE BUSINESS MEN OF ENGLAND : CONSISTING OF BRIEF AND SUGGESTIVE MORAL READINGS ON THE "BOOK OF PROVERBS" FOR EVERY DAY IN THE YEAR. By DAVID THOMAS, D.D. THIRD THOUSAND. London : The Book Society, Paternoster Row ; R. Dickenson and Co., Farringdon Street.

THIS large volume, which contains upwards of 800 pages and abounds with illustrations from the greatest writers in all ages, is now running through the *third thousand* ; two thousand have been disposed of within a few months. As the editor of the *HOMILIST* will not allow in these pages editorial eulogies to be pronounced on this book, the writer may be permitted to publish the following recommendations from other sources :—

THE BRITISH QUARTERLY says : "The exposition is luminous, and the illustrations adopted by the author are startling and effective. There is sacred wisdom suited to secular life and devout experience put within the reach of the busy drudge. Dr. Thomas has not softened down the rugged energy or sheathed the glittering shaft of the grand old words."

THE ENGLISH INDEPENDENT says : " It would be impertinence to praise a man whose volumes of homilies are to be found in most clerical libraries, and who has for several years past helped to give a higher tone to the pulpit teaching of modern time. . . . Acquainted as we are with most of Dr. Thomas's works, we have no hesitation in saying that, in our judgment, this volume on the Proverbs is equal to, if not better than, the best of all that have preceded it. It is rich in practical suggestiveness and high moral teaching. There is a forceful direct power in the teaching which cannot fail to be productive of the noblest results."

THE CHRISTIAN FAMILY says : " The expositions are at once vigorous, eloquent, and impressive. We trust that many merchants and tradesmen will buy the volume and keep it at hand. Preachers and teachers too will find it abounding in quickening suggestion."

THE WELSH QUARTERLY says : " We have read various other works on the Proverbs, and we venture to say, without the least hesitation, that they are not worthy for a moment to be compared in power, appropriateness, and stimulus to the work before us. The best characteristics of Dr. Thomas's pen are to be found in this volume, and those best characteristics in their best power and clothing. The meaning is clear, the sentences chaste, pointed, and brief, the thought philosophic, and the spirit living."

THE PEMBROKESHIRE HERALD says : " In short simply worded sentences, almost any one of which would adorn a collection of aphorisms, the author enunciates a succession of ideas the most profound and suggestive ; not only supplying thought, but doing so in such a manner as to awaken thought in others—the teacher's highest art."

THE CITY ROAD WESLEYAN MAGAZINE says : " The notes are brief and sententious : telegrams suited not only to an age of rapid action, but likewise to the nature of the section of the sacred volume which furnishes the texts. The book is rich in good thoughts, many of them new, all of them, from the manner in which they are presented, fresh. The ethics of the book are admirable. The writer's standard of commercial, social, and spiritual morality is lofty and pure."

Amongst the many strong personal recommendations of the work, the following from Rev. J. GUINNESS ROGERS, B.A., of Clapham, may be selected :—

" To write a thoroughly able book on the Proverbs is no small achievement, but it has been accomplished successfully by my friend Dr. Thomas. His work bears the stamp of real genius. In its careful analysis, its suggestive expositions, and its wise practical counsels, it is a model of what such a commentary intended mainly for the Christian home should be. Every purchaser of this work will have a most valuable book for perusal or family reading "

The published price of the book is 17s. 6d., but to subscribers 12s. 6d.



The Healing of the Nobleman's Son.

"So Jesus came again into Cana of Galilee," &c.—John iv. 46—54.

EXPOSITORY remarks on this passage will be found on another page in this number. The narrative, though short, is full of interest and deep meaning: it throws up to our view several points of thought too important not to notice with some amount of attention. One point is this:—

I. That the history of Christ often exerts a PRACTICAL influence upon men who are NOT amongst His genuine disciples. There were no doubt many genuine disciples in the neighbourhood in which this nobleman lived. In "Cana of Galilee" Christ in His first miracle had "manifested forth His power," and "many of His disciples" believed on Him. But this nobleman does not appear to have been amongst them. The faith that prompted him to go forth in search of Christ does not seem to have been recognised by the Messiah as of much worth. The man undoubtedly had heard so many floating stories in his neighbourhood concerning our Lord that he felt that peradventure He could and would help him in his domestic emergency. Up to this point he had no strong convictions concerning Him, or any vital sympathy with

His spirit, His doctrines, or His aims. Certain facts about His life, which to him were more or less in shadow, alone influenced him up to the point of his leaving his home in quest of Christ. Christ's name had become a power in Galilee already.—A noble name is evermore a wide, unconscious, and often unacknowledged social force for good. Christ's mere history has for eighteen centuries influenced millions of men whom charity cannot rank amongst His true disciples. His history to-day throughout Christendom affects the movements and external conduct of rulers, statesmen, authors, artists, and whole classes who have no living or practical sympathy whatever with Him or His cause.

Another point that presents itself here is:—

II. That no WORLDLY GREATNESS can SHIELD MEN from any of the COMMON CALAMITIES of life.

Here is a nobleman *whose son is dying*. His son "was at the point of death." The young have ever been disposed to imagine that their parents must sicken and die before them—that because they are young death is afar off. The cemeteries of the world prove that the vast majority of the human race die in childhood, and that but very few live to the age of fifty. The first grave dug on earth was not dug for a father, but a son. Aaron lost two sons with one stroke. David followed one after another of his children to the grave—the patriarch of Uz was bereft of all his children in one short day. The agonies of the dying son were not the only sufferings in the mansion of that nobleman, his own heart was breaking and perhaps that of his wife and other children as well. Such are ordinary trials, they are the common calamities of the race. Everywhere throughout the world you will find dying children and distressed parents. This man's wealth, position, influence, could not ward off such dire events. Death dares all opposition and knows no adventitious distinctions,

treats all alike, has an access as easy to the royal chamber as to a pauper's hut: "the rich man also died and was buried."

"If hoarded gold possess'd the power
To lengthen life's too fleeting hour,
And purchase from the hand of Death
A little span, a moment's breath,
How I would love the precious ore!
And every hour should swell my store;
That when Death came, with shadowy pinion,
To waft me to his bleak dominion,
I might by bribes my doom delay,
And bid him call some distant day.
But since not all earth's golden store
Can buy for us one bright hour more,
Why should we vainly mourn our fate,
Or sigh at life's uncertain date?
Nor wealth nor grandeur can illumine
The silent midnight of the tomb."—*Thomas Moore.*

Another point that stands out in this narrative is—

III. That CHRIST's treatment of men DIFFERS WIDELY from that of AN IMPOSTOR. In a case of this kind how should we have expected an impostor to have acted? Nay, how should we have expected even an ordinary religious teacher to have acted?

First: We should have expected that He would have dealt *somewhat obsequiously with this nobleman*. To say nothing of an impostor, if a "nobleman" were to enter some of our chapels, how would the modern minister be likely to act towards him? Would there be no fawning, no servile homage? Alas! there are popular preachers not unknown to us who follow the great as dogs their masters.

Secondly: We should have expected that He would have *acceded at once to the request* of this nobleman. Were a nobleman to ask a favour of some religious teachers which they could grant without much inconvenience to themselves, they would render it at once with a proud exulta-

tion. Their vanity would be so much flattered that they would not only grant the boon in a moment, but emblazon the act as one of the most radiant incidents in their lives.

Thirdly: We should have expected that He would have *looked for some compensation for any service that He might render to the nobleman.* Few noblemen would feel that they would insult a religious teacher by rendering some tangible acknowledgment for services, and but few teachers would fail to look for such manifestation. Naaman offered remuneration, nor were Elijah and Elisha above accepting acknowledgments for their services. But how stands the matter in relation to Christ, as indicated in this incident? Did the humble Galilean fall down before this nobleman when he appeared? Not He, but thundered in his ears a reproof, "Except ye see signs and wonders ye will not believe." Did He accede to his request at once? No, He seemed to repel him, and hence the nobleman became more importunate: "Sir, come down ere my child die." Thus He acted, too, with Nicodemus, the Syro-Phœnician mother, and others. He showed no servile anxiety to win adherents to His cause. Did He expect acknowledgment for His services? No. It is remarkable that not only do you not find in any part of the history of Christ a case where He asked for compensation for His numerous services, but, what is more striking still, you will not find one who dared to insult Him by making such an offer. Strange that this nobleman, with the wonted generosity of the East, did not suggest remuneration; but he saw a moral majesty sitting upon the brow of that poor Galilean that repelled the idea.

A little incident like this brings out to me Jesus of Nazareth in sublime contrast to all the religious teachers of the world, ancient and modern, heathen and Christian. He stands above them, high as the ever-burning stars above the flickering gas-lights of our streets.

Another point that stands out in this narrative is—

IV. That a **GENUINE CONFIDENCE** in Christ has its **PROGRESSIVE GROWTH**. We find faith in this nobleman in three distinct stages: (1) In leaving his home to meet Christ. Unless he had possessed some amount of confidence in the capability of Christ to heal his son, would he have left his dying boy and gone out in search of him? There was faith in germ. (2) In leaving Christ to return to his home. "Jesus saith unto him, Go thy way, thy son liveth, and the man believed the word that Jesus had spoken and he went his way." Up to this time he had not believed that Christ could cure his son unless He went to the spot. Now he believed in that: "Go thy way, thy son liveth." It is quite conceivable that on his way home he might have some misgivings, some doubts as to whether the cure had taken place or not. Still he believed. (3) The intelligence he received from his servants on his way home. On meeting the servants who told him that his son was living, and inquiring the hour when he began to mend, he found that the fever left the son the very hour at which Jesus spoke the words, "Thy son liveth."

Here was another stage in his faith. Its roots must have struck deeply with this intelligence. So strong was his faith now that he converted the whole household. Faith begets faith. In truth, a man must believe before he can make believers.

Thus genuine faith is progressive: it has the blade, the ear, and the full corn of the ear, and the full corn can multiply itself as in the case of the nobleman's family.

Another point that stands out in this narrative is—

V. That **TRUE PRAYER** can bring to the **SUPPLIANT SUPERNATURAL RELIEF**. Here is the prayer: "He besought him that he would come down and heal his son," and after an apparent rebuff it is repeated, "Sir, come down ere my child die." Here is the relief, "Thy son liveth,"

and the relief is obviously supernatural. Who could doubt this miracle? "It was performed at several miles' distance, upon a person whom He had never seen, and where, therefore, there was no shadow of pretence for saying that there was collusion or imposture. It satisfied the father of the child, who left him at the point of death. It satisfied those who remained at home and saw how instantaneously he recovered; and it ought to satisfy us, who live in this distant age and quarter of the world, that Christ by divine power wrought this miracle, although we have not been witnesses to its effects."

Now prayer brought this supernatural result. Indeed, I scarcely know whether I should use the word supernatural, for as nature far transcends the reach of the greatest intelligence, and as there are confessedly elements at work both in the world of matter and the world of mind, which none of our philosophers can explain or even detect, it may turn out that what we call supernatural is only natural after all, and that Christ now sent relief to this young man through some regular law that has yet to be discovered. Modern scientists aver that the doctrine of answers to prayer is an absurdity only to be entertained by the ignorant and superstitious of mankind. They, from the lofty heights to which their scientific genius has lifted them, regard with supercilious compassion, if not with contempt, those who believe in the efficacy of prayer. Whilst upon me, as a believer in the power of prayer, they look down with scorn, I in all sincerity look up to them with reverence and thanks. The true Church of Christ, which can only live in the sun of intelligence, as well as the great world at large, owe them a deep and ever-increasing debt of gratitude. Their discoveries have thrown floods of light upon the pages of our Bible, and most of the arts that bless and adorn the civilised world must be traced to the results of their

inquiries. Albeit, I fail to discover their scientific wisdom in their scoffings at prayer. Do they say that the "established order of nature" stands immovably against the doctrine of the efficacy of human supplication? Then I ask, How much of nature has come under the scrutiny of their own observation? Is it a yard as compared with an acre, or an acre as compared with a yard? I care not which, but ask, May it not be that just in the area, whether large or small, lying outside their personal observation, there may be natural phenomena not in harmony with their ideas of the established order of things?

Moreover, on the assumption that there is an intelligent First Cause pervading all space and permeating all existences, the force of all forces, the spring of all activities, is it not to the last degree absurd and presumptuous to deny the possibility of answers to prayer? And still yet, I inquire, is not the physical condition of mankind always more or less dependent upon the ideas that influence them? Are not human ideas the germs of all human institutions and the mainspring of all human activities? If so, you have only to operate on man's ideas in order to affect his physical condition. Is there anything, therefore, absurd in supposing that God, through prayer, can or does influence human ideas? But why reason on the subject when the Bible, whose authority I hold divine, abounds both with the assurance and examples of the fact that the "effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much."

Where, it has been asked, is the necessity for prayer, since the great God is too loving to require persuasion, too intelligent to require information concerning our wants? Can prayer make the Infinitely Merciful more kind, the Omniscient more intelligent? God, says a modern author,* "undoubtedly knows all our wants; but

* See an admirable pamphlet entitled "The Inter-relations of Prayer, Providence, and Science." By Rev. James McCann, D.D.

that is not sufficient—we must know them ourselves, and feel our need of having them supplied, for the supply to be a real benefit to us.” We all know that the value of a gift increases in the same ratio as the power of the recipient to appreciate it. Suppose a physician gave some medicine to two persons, one of whom felt himself dying, and who came entreating help; the other, although in exactly the same condition, was unconscious of it, and took the medicine merely to honour the doctor. The bodies of both may perhaps be equally influenced, but will their minds? The one will depart profoundly grateful, but the other self-complacent at his own supposed kindness of disposition.

“ There is an eye that never sleeps
 Beneath the wing of night ;
 There is an ear that never shuts
 When sink the beams of light.
 There is an arm that never tires
 When human strength gives way ;
 There is a love that never fails
 When earthly loves decay.
 That eye is fixed on seraph throngs ;
 That ear is filled with angel's songs ;
 That arm upholds the world on high ;
 That love is throned beyond the sky.
 But there's a power which man can wield
 When mortal aid is vain,
 That eye, that arm, that love to reach
 That listening ear to gain ;
 That power is prayer, which soars on high,
 And feeds on bliss beyond the sky.”

Another point that stands out in this narrative is—

VI. That GREAT TEMPORAL CALAMITIES often lead to the HIGHEST SPIRITUAL GOOD. The temporal affliction of this nobleman brought himself and whole family to Christ. It was simple trial that impelled him in the first place to go to Christ. Probably, all healing resources at his command he had tried with his dying son, and they had failed,

and now he was driven from the natural to the supernatural. Nature could do no more for him : his only hope was that the miraculous worker of whom he had heard might come to his relief. Trials often act thus. For this purpose they are sent. When prosperous men are reduced to pauperism, and strong men to physical infirmity, and men accustomed to society to a state of absolute loneliness, moral reflection is stimulated, spiritual enquiries are started, questions are asked about the spiritual and eternal. As the material vanishes from the man the spiritual becomes closer ; as the temporal recedes the eternal comes pressing on. Men in all ages can say " It is good for me that I was afflicted ; before I was afflicted I went astray." There is meaning in what an old Athenian is reported to have said, " I should have been lost if I had not been lost." Want drove the prodigal back to his father's house. Affliction brought Manasseh back to the God of Israel. Affliction deals with men as the parent eagle with her young when she takes them from her nest where they have been sheltered and indulged, bears them off on her wings into mid-heaven and shakes them off into immensity, there to struggle for themselves.

When men are stripped of all physical good their spirits often begin to struggle on their way towards the great Fountain of Life. Well does Sir Walter Scott say, " There are those to whom a sense of religion has come in storm and tempest, and there are those whom it has summoned amid scenes of revelry and idle vanity ; there are those who have heard its ' still small voice ' amid rural leisure and placid contentment. But perhaps the knowledge which cometh not to err is most frequently impressed upon the mind during seasons of affliction ; and tears are the softening showers which cause the seed of heaven to spring and take root in the human heart."

Homiletic Sketches on the Book of Psalms.

Our Purpose.—Many learned and devout men have gone *philologically* through this *TEHELIM*, this book of Hebrew hymns, and have left us the rich results of their inquiries in volumes within the reach of every Biblical student. To do the mere verbal *hermeneutics* of this book, even as well as it has been done, would be to contribute nothing fresh in the way of evoking or enforcing its Divine ideas. A thorough *HOMILETIC* treatment it has never yet received, and to this work we here commit ourselves, determining to employ the best results of modern Biblical scholarship.

Our Method.—Our plan of treatment will comprise four sections:—(1.) The *HISTORY* of the passage. Lyric poetry, which the book is, is a delineation of living character; and the key, therefore, to unlock the meaning and reach the spirit of the words is a knowledge of the men and circumstances that the poet sketches with his lyric pencil.—(2.) *ANNOTATIONS* of the passage. This will include short explanatory notes on any ambiguous word, phrase, or allusion that may occur.—(3.) The *ARGUMENT* of the passage. A knowledge of the main drift of an author is amongst the most essential conditions for interpreting his meaning.—(4.) The *HOMILETICS* of the passage. This is our main work. We shall endeavour so to group the Divine ideas that have been legitimately deduced, as to suggest such thoughts, and indicate such sermonising methods, as may promote the proficiency of modern pulpit ministrations.

Subject.—Fretful Envy. (1) Wicked Men as its objects.

“Fret not thyself because of evil doers, neither be thou envious against the workers of iniquity. For they shall soon be cut down like the grass, and wither as the green herb.”—Psalm xxxvii. 1, 2.

HISTORY.—The heading ascribes this composition to David, and although it is called a Psalm, the word is supplied by our translators, it is not in the original. We have no information as to the occasion of its composition. The circumstances connected with the two great classes of mankind in the world, the wicked and the righteous, which were then, as ever, very perplexing to the pious, constitute the text of the whole poem or discourse. The aim of the author throughout is to reconcile what appear discrepancies in the providence of God in relation to mankind by a number of remarks, tending to a solution of difficulties that pressed upon the minds of the thoughtful and devout. “The sure connection between wickedness and punishment was a lesson which

was impressed upon the men of that age by the destruction of unrighteous empires and the fall of tyrants ; and it is here set forth by the Psalmist, a man clearly of age and experience, in a psalm composed mainly of quotations from other books : with a burden of practical admonitions not to envy the present prosperity of the wicked, but rather to wait in patient resignation for the just judgments of God." It is what is called an alphabetical psalm, but the alphabetical arrangement is here, as in other cases of the same kind, not perfect.

ANNOTATIONS. *Ver. 1.*—"Fret not thyself because of evil doers, neither be thou envious against the workers of iniquity." "Be not incensed at the evil doers, be not envious of the workers of iniquity."—*Delitzsch*. The verb "fret" here in Hebrew means properly, "to turn, to flame with anger ;" hence "incensed," as *Delitzsch* has it, is a good translation. Indeed fretting is a kind of burning, it is a worrying which heats the brain, and fires the passions. The words may be regarded as addressed personally to some one who the writer knew was fretting himself because of the prosperity of wicked men, or to some imaginary individual, the type of a large class, who in every age are rendered unhappy by "reason of apparent providential discrepancies."

Ver. 2.—"For they shall soon be cut down like the grass, and wither as the green herb." "This verse assigns the reason of the exhortation in the one before it. Why should we vex ourselves, or indulge an envious feeling towards that which is so soon to perish, and is therefore rather an object of compassion ? These two verses contain the theme, of which the rest is a protracted variation."—*Alexander*.

ARGUMENT.—The thought running throughout this Psalm is that the prosperity of the wicked is only seeming, and that of the Godly is real ; consequently, after all, fretful envy concerning the supposed prosperity of the wicked is without any foundation in reason or justice.

HOMILETICS.—Homiletically, we shall take the psalm as setting forth FRETFUL ENVY. It leads us to consider the nature, the antidote, and folly of fretful envy. We shall confine our attention at present to the nature of fretful envy. We observe :—

I. That it is a PAINFUL PASSION. "Fret not thyself because of evil doers," &c. There may be fretfulness where there is no envy. One may fret because of the tardy advancement of a cause dear to his heart, or because of the troubles of those in whom he is interested. There is a great deal of fretfulness that is almost constitutional and necessary,

and therefore innocent and free from all "envy;" but there can be no envy where there is not fretfulness. What is envy? It is not merely a desire to possess that good which another has: that is emulation. To crave after that which gives power, and worth, and happiness is a laudable ambition. We are commanded to "covet earnestly the best gifts." But "envy" is a malicious desire to possess what others have: it means their deprivation. Jealousy is a dread lest another shall possess what we wish for ourselves; envy is a dislike for another because he actually possesses the good desired; and because it is so impregnated with the malign it is always fretful. It is a grudging, growling passion; it is never at rest. I remember reading somewhere in a Grecian story of a man who killed himself through envy. His fellow-citizens had reared a statue to one of their number, who was a celebrated victor in the public games. So strong was the feeling of envy which this excited in the breast of one of the hero's rivals that he went forth every night in order, if possible, to destroy that monument; after repeated efforts he moved it from its pedestal, and it fell, and in its fall crushed him. An unintentional symbolic act was this, showing the suicidal action of envy on the soul. It is ever an element of misery, a burning coal which "comes hissing hot from hell." Abraham Cowley gives the following description of this malignant passion:—

"Envy at last crawls forth from hell's dire throng,
Of all the direfullest! her black locks hung long.
Attir'd with curling serpents; her pale skin
Was almost dropp'd from her sharp bones within;
And at her breast stuck vipers, which did prey
Upon her panting heart both night and day,
Sucking black blood from thence, which to repair,
Both day and night they left fresh poisons there.
Her garments were deep-stained in human gore,
And torn by her own hands, in which she bore
A knotted whip and bowl, which to the brim
Did with green gall and juice of wornwood swim.

With which when she was drunk she furious grew ;
And lashed herself : thus from the accursed crew
Envy, the worst of fiends, herself presents :
Envy, good only when she herself torments."

II. It is a **FOOLISH** passion. It is directed against the most *unenviable* of characters. "The workers of iniquity will be cut down like the grass." It is directed against men who have a wretched character, and who are to meet with a wretched destiny. The folly of this passion as directed to such objects will be exhibited more fully when we come to notice the last verses of the Psalm. Who would envy the monarch in all the pomp of state on his way to the gallows? What captain of the smallest craft would envy the commander of the most majestic ship as he saw her dashed upon the rocks, and about going down? Why, then, should anyone envy wicked men, however vast their possessions or commanding their influence, when he knows that they are abhorrent to Heaven, and are on the high road to ruin! But though a painful passion, how universal. Wherever we look for examples, we find them in the past and in the present. "We shall find it," says James, "in Cain, the proto-murderer, who slew his brother at the instigation of envy. We shall find it in the dark and gloomy and revengeful spirit of Saul, who under the influence of envy plotted for years the slaughter of David. We shall find it in the king of Israel, when he pined for the vineyard of Naboth, and shed blood to gain it. Yea, it was envy that perpetrated that most atrocious crime ever planned in hell, or executed on earth, on which the sun refused to look, and at which nature gave signs of abhorrence by the rending of the rocks—I mean the Crucifixion of Christ; for the evangelist tells us, that for envy the Jews delivered our Lord." "Fret not thyself then because of evil men, neither be thou envious at the wicked. For there shall be no reward to the evil man; the candle of the wicked shall be put out" (Proverbs xxiv. 19, 20). "Let not thine heart envy sinners; but be thou in the fear of the Lord all the day long" (Proverbs xxiii. 17).

Homiletic Sketches on the Book of Job.

The Book of Job is one of the grandest sections of Divine Scripture. It has never yet, to our knowledge, been treated in a purely Homiletic method for Homiletic ends. Besides many learned expositions on the book found in our general commentaries, we have special exegetical volumes of good scholarly and critical worth; such as Dra. Barnes, Wenyns, Mason Goode, Noyes Lee, Delitzsch, and Herman Hedwick Bernard: the last is in every way a masterly production. For us, therefore, to go into philology and verbal criticism, when such admirable works are available to all students, would be superfluous, if not presumption. Ambiguous terms, when they occur, we shall of course explain, and occasionally suggest an improved rendering: but our work will be chiefly, if not entirely, Homiletic. We shall essay to bring out from the grand old words those Divine verities which are true and vital to man as man in all lands and ages. These truths we shall frame in an order as philosophic and suggestive as our best powers will enable us to do; and this in order to help the earnest preachers of God's Holy Word.

Subject.—Zophar's first speech to Job—Questionable reproofing and necessary teaching.

"Then answered Zophar the Naamathite, and said, Should not the multitude of words be answered? and should a man full of talk be justified? Should thy lies make men hold their peace? and when thou mockest, shall no man make thee ashamed? For thou hast said, My doctrine is pure, and I am clean in thine eyes. But oh that God would speak, and open his lips against thee; and that he would shew thee the secrets of wisdom, that they are double to that which is! Know, therefore, that God exacteth of thee less than thine iniquity deserveth."—Job xi. 1—6.

EXEGETICAL REMARKS.—*Vcr 1.*—"Then answered Zophar the Naamathite." Zophar, whom we have sketched in our notes on chap. ii. 11, does not seem to possess the ability, tenderness, or refinement of the other speakers.

Vcr. 2.—"Should not the multitude of words be answered? and should a man full of talk be justified?" The discourse of Job in the preceding chapters was certainly longer than any of the preceding speakers, and Zophar here sarcastically refers to its wordiness. "Should not the multitude of thy words be answered? and should a man full of talk be justified?" This man seemed to think that silence was golden, and that much talk was worse than worthless.

Ver. 3.—"Should thy lies make men hold their peace?" "Thine inventions may put mortal men to silence, and them thou mayest mock, none putting thee to shame."—DR. BERNARD. The idea seems to be this, Shalt thou be permitted to use all this vaunting and complaining language, and no one call thee to an account, and so show thee the impropriety of the whole as to make thee ashamed?

Ver. 4.—"For thou hast said, My doctrine is pure, and I am clean in thine eyes." For "doctrine" some read "conduct," but, as I think, without good authority. When, or where, did Job say that either his doctrines or deeds were pure? This seems, on Zophar's part, a false and groundless charge.

Ver. 5.—"But oh that God would speak, and open his lips against thee." This means, Oh that God would reveal himself to thee and speak with thee face to face. Instead of "against" read *with*, "opened his lips *with* thee." A better wish than this we can have from no one—direct intercourse with the highest mind.

Ver. 6.—"And that he would shew thee the secrets of wisdom, that they are double to that which is! Know, therefore, that God exacteth of thee less than thine iniquity deserveth."—"That He would shew thee the secrets of wisdom; for they far exceed the most perfect knowledge. Thou wouldest then know that God overlooketh many of thy sins."—A. ELZAS. "And would proclaim to thee the secrets of wisdom, for wisdom is twofold (human and divine); then wouldest thou know that God remitteth thee part of thy punishment."—DR. BERNARD. Zophar here seems to wish that God would show to Job at least two things: (1) the manifoldness of His wisdom. He speaks of the secrets of wisdom as "double that which is;" that is, manifolded wisdom. God's wisdom, says Barnes, is like a vast roll or volume, only the first of a very small part of which is unrolled, so that we can read. (2) The charitableness of God. He exacteth less than we deserve.

HOMILETICS. Though Zophar was not an inspired man, and though there was a rudeness and an insolence in some of his expressions, yet he stated many things that were true, and of useful contemplation for men in all ages. Truth is a divine and highly serviceable element however it may come to us, through stones or stars, through sentient or insentient life, through fiends or seraphs. Let us, therefore, take the truth that this old Arabian presents to us, although we may not have much faith in the accuracy of his judgment or the

beauty of his character. In the verses heading this article we have two subjects for thought.

I. QUESTIONABLE REPROOF. Reproof is often an urgent duty. It is the hardest act of friendship, for whilst there are but few men who do not at times merit reprehension, there are fewer still who will graciously receive, or even patiently endure a reproving word, and "Considering," as John Foster has it, "how many difficulties a friend has to surmount before he can bring himself to reprove me, I ought to be much obliged to him for his chiding words." The reproof which Zophar, in the first four verses, addressed to Job suggests two remarks.

First: The charges he brings against Job, if true, *justly deserve reproof*. What does he charge him with? (1) Loquacity. "Should not the multitude of words be answered? and should not a man full of talk be justified?" Great garrulousness is generally a serious evil; even if the multitude of words are not vehicles of errors and impurities, but of truth and virtue, they are, more or less, an offence and an injury. They weary the hearer and deaden impressions which the subjects communicated would make if briefly and suggestively told. But, as a rule, where there are multitudes of words there are multitudes of inanities and falsehoods, and foul sentiments. As the tree with the most luxuriant leafage is generally least fruitful, so the man "full of talk" is, as a rule, most empty. It is ever true that in the "multitude of words there wanteth not sin," and "every man should be swift to hear and slow" to speak. He charges him (2) with falsehood. "Should thy lies make men hold their peace?" For "lies," in the margin we have "devices."^a Zophar means to say that much of what Job said was not according to truth, not fact, but the ungrounded inventions or fancies of his own mind. Lies are evermore bad things. They are the base progeny, either of ignorance, greed, vanity, or servile fear, and their influence, both upon their author and society, are in every way pernicious. The "lying lips" is one of hell's mightiest and most effective organs upon this earth of ours.

He charges him (3) with irreverence. "And when thou mockest, shall no man make thee ashamed?" In all probability the speaker means that Job in his words was mocking God, that they breathed irreverence, and even profanity. When a man loses reverence for the Supreme he loses the soil in which alone the seeds of virtue and truth can grow within him. He loses the ear by which alone he can catch the divine harmonies of nature, the interpreting faculty by which alone he can reach and feel the moral meaning of life. Sad to say, our age is becoming irreverent, our very pulpits are often the mere stage for the exhibition of buffooneries. He charges him (4) with hypocrisy. "But thou hast said, My doctrine is pure, and I am clean in thine eyes." He means to say that Job was anything but what he professed to be; he arrogated to himself great purity in doctrine and in life, but he was nevertheless vile, and therefore he was a mere religious pretender.

Now, we are far enough from admitting that any of these charges which Zophar here brings against Job were grounded in truth. Where is the proof that he was a *garrulous* man? His speeches up to this point had not been very lengthy, and they were certainly brimful of thought, sentiment, and passion. Where is the proof that he was a *false* man? We detect no falsehood in any of his utterances, and the agonies he endured were scarcely such as to admit of exaggeration. Where is the proof that he was an *irreverent* man? It is true that some of his utterances in relation to God were somewhat extravagant, but these were extracted from him, not only by the intensity of his sufferings, but by the fallacious reasonings of those who called themselves his friends. Where is the proof of his hypocrisy here? Had not the Almighty Himself declared that he was a man who feared God, eschewed evil, perfect and upright? We pronounce therefore this man's charges against Job as utterly untrue to the facts of his life. Another remark which this man's reproof suggests is—

Secondly: That the charges, if true, *could not justify the spirit and style of his reproof*. Considering the high character

and the trying circumstances of Job, and the professions of Zophar as his friend, there is a heartlessness and an insolence in his reproof most reprehensible and revolting. There have been insolent men in all ages, who have taken upon themselves the mission of addressing their fellow-men on behalf of virtue and God. Coarse, rude, insolent men are often found to be the most popular in the religious ministries of the age. There is no real religion in rudeness; there is no divine inspiration in insolence.

Reproof, to be of any worth, should not merely be deserved, but should be given in a right spirit, a spirit of meekness, tenderness, and love. "Reprehension is not an act of butchery, but an act of surgery," says Secker. There are those who confound bluntness with honesty, insolence with straightforwardness. They pride themselves on a coarse outspokenness. The true reproof is of a different metal, and his words fall, not like the rushing hailstorm, but like the gentle dew. They do not wound like stones, but insinuate and heal like oil. The nail of reproof, says an old writer, must be well oiled in kindness before it is driven home. The other subject for thought contained in these verses is—

II. NECESSARY TEACHING. These words suggest that kind of teaching which is essential to the well-being of every man. What is it?

First: *It is intercourse with the mind of God.* "Oh that God would speak and open his lips against thee." The great need of the soul is direct communication with God. All teachers are utterly worthless unless they bring God in contact with the soul of the student. If this globe is to be warmed into life the sun must do it. He must visit it, penetrate its soil with his living beams. No number of stars can do it. So if the soul is to be quickened into true life, beauty, and fruitfulness, God Himself must "speak to it." He must "open" His lips "with it." No number of creature teachers, however exalted or inspired, can do it. Secular education is a solecism, a contradiction in terms. There is no education without God. What is it?

Secondly: It is *instruction in the wisdom of God*. "And that he would shew thee the secrets of wisdom, that they are double to that which is!" God's wisdom is profound; it has its "secrets." God's wisdom is "double," it is many folded; fold within fold, without end. It is a volume that will take eternity to read. Now it is necessary that we should be instructed in God's wisdom, that we should be instructed in God's principles, God's ways, God's procedure, God's operations. What man calls philosophy is often little else than foolosophy. It is God's wisdom we want to study. What is it?

Thirdly: It is *faith in the forbearing love of God*. "Know therefore that God exacteth of thee less than thine iniquity deserveth." Here is love, forbearing love. Truly, "He hath not dealt with us after our sins, nor rewarded us according to our iniquities." "It is of the Lord's mercy that we are not consumed, because His compassion fails not."

Conclusion: This is the necessary teaching. We do not say that Zophar meant this, but this is what his words suggest. The indispensable teaching is intercourse with the mind of God, instruction in the wisdom of God, and faith in the forbearing love of God. Give us this, we want no more. The Divinity speaking to us, revealing Himself in us, giving us impressions of His love. What need we more? He who has this may well sing:—

"To me remains nor place, nor time;
My country is in every clime;
I can be calm, and free from care
On any shore, since God is there.
While place we seek, or place we shun,
The soul finds happiness in none;
But with a God to guide our way,
'Tis equal joy to go or stay.
Could I be cast where Thou art not,
That were indeed a dreadful lot;
But regions none remote I call,
Secure of finding God in all.
My country, Lord, art Thou alone;
No other can I claim to own;
The point where all my wishes meet,
My law, my love; life's only sweet."

MADAME GUYON.

Sermonic Glances at the Gospel of St. John.

As our purpose in the treatment of this Gospel is purely the development, in the briefest and most suggestive form, of Sermonic outlines, we must refer our readers to the following works for all critical inquiries into the author and authorship of the book, and also for any minute criticisms on difficult clauses. The works we shall especially consult are:—"Introduction to New Testament," by Bleek; "Commentary on John," by Tholuck; "Commentary on John," by Hengstenberg; "Introduction to the Study of the Gospels," by Westcott; "The Gospel History," by Ebrard; "Our Lord's Divinity," by Liddon; "St. John's Gospel," by Oosterzee; "Doctrine of the Person of Christ," by Dornor; Lange; &c., &c.

Subject.—The Healing of the Nobleman's Son.

"So Jesus came again into Cana of Galilee, where he made the water wine. And there was a certain nobleman, whose son was sick at Capernaum. When he heard that Jesus was come out of Judæa into Galilee, he went unto him, and besought him that he would come down, and heal his son: for he was at the point of death. Then said Jesus unto him, Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe. The nobleman saith unto him, Sir, come down ere my child die. Jesus saith unto him, Go thy way; thy son liveth. And the man believed the word that Jesus had spoken unto him, and he went his way. And as he was now going down, his servants met him, and told him, saying, Thy son liveth. Then enquired he of them the hour when he began to amend. And they said unto him, Yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him. So the father knew that it was at the same hour in the which Jesus said unto him, Thy son liveth: and himself believed, and his whole house. This is again the second miracle that Jesus did, when he was come out of Judæa into Galilee."—John iv. 46—54.

EXPOSITION. Ver. 46.—"*So Jesus came again into Cana of Galilee, where he made the water wine. And there was a certain nobleman whose son was sick at Capernaum.*" This nobleman (*Bartholomæus*) was probably connected with the royal household. Such as Chuza, Luke vii. 3, or Naaman, Acts xxx. i. Josephus uses the term to distinguish the officers of the king, from kings (as Herod), from those at Rome (as Caesar's). He was probably a Jew. "Some have taken this nobleman to be identical with the centurion of Capernaum" (Irenæus, Semler, Strauss, Baungarten, Crusius). The office, the sick boy, the distance

healing, are similar features. On the other side are these differences : (1) The time : here, before the removal of Jesus to Capernaum ; there, long after it. (2) The place of Christ at the time : here, Cana ; there, the vicinity of Capernaum. (3) The characters : here, excited, weak, feebly believing ; there, calm, confident, strong of faith. Other differences, by themselves considered, might be more easily wiped away. The *υἱός* here, the *δοῦλος* there (a distinction however, which is not resolved by the common *παῖς* : here, the boy is a small boy, a child, ver. 49 ; there, a stout youth), a Gentile ; here, a miracle-believer, probably a Jew. Yet, these with the foregoing strengthen the difference. But the most decisive diversity is in the judgment of the Lord. The faith of the centurion He commends with admiration ; the faith of the nobleman He must first subject to a trial."—*Dr. Lange.*

Ver. 47.—"When he had heard that Jesus was come out of Judæa unto Galilee, he went unto him, and besought him that he would come down, and heal his son : for he was at the point of death." From what Christ had done both at Jerusalem in cleansing the Temple, and at Cana in turning water into wine, this nobleman had received such an impression of Christ's miraculous power as to have inspired the hope that He would restore his son that was dying.

Ver. 48.—"Then said Jesus unto him, Except ye see signs and wonders." These two words (*σημεῖα καὶ*) are significant, the former seems to express the *supernatural* character of an act, and the latter the demonstration which it promised of a divine power. "*Ye will not believe.*" But he had believed to some extent. What but faith prompted him to come forth in quest of Christ ? But his faith was thus far very imperfect : it was only in embryo.

Ver. 49.—"The nobleman said unto him, Sir, come down ere my child die." "The moment is serious, there is not an instant to lose. While I am speaking, my child is dying." But why "come down" ? Will not thy faith enable thee to believe that the great Messiah can do His work without being on the spot ? This thou wilt believe, however, ere the work is done.

Ver. 50.—"Jesus saith unto him, Go thy way ; thy son liveth. And the man believed the word that Jesus had spoken unto him, and he went his way." "Both effects instantaneously followed : the man believed the word ; and the cure, shooting quicker than lightning from Cana to Capernaum, was felt by the dying youth. In token of faith, the father takes his leave of Christ. On the circumstances this evidenced full faith."—*Dr. Brown.*

Ver. 51.—"And as he was now going down, his servants met him, and

told him, saying, *Thy son liveth.*" How this intelligence must have deepened his faith, as well as flooded his heart with parental delight.

Ver. 52.—"Then enquired he of them the hour when he began to amend. And they said unto him, *Yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him.*" The fact, though transporting to him as a parent, did not satisfy the new craving that his growing faith had gendered within him. He desires to seek out the cause.

Ver. 53.—"So the father knew that it was at the same hour in the which Jesus said unto him, *Thy son liveth: and himself believed, and his whole house.*" Here is faith that has become so strong that it propagates itself through the whole family.

Ver. 54.—"This is again the second miracle that Jesus did, when he was come out of *Judaea into Galilee.*" Both were in connection with domestic life: the one was in connection with a marriage, the other with a death-bed.

For Homiletics on this passage, see Leading Homily.

Germs of Thought.

Subject.—The Saviour's Sigh.

"And looking up to heaven, he sighed."—Mark vii. 34.

THE first of these actions is easily comprehended, the second is somewhat obscure. That Jesus should look "up to heaven" need awaken little surprise. It was most *natural*. We often find a singular correspondence between the body and the spirit. This holds good of our Lord. Thus, Mark tells us that in Gethsemane Christ fell down and prayed. How appropriate! When His soul was prostrate in submission, exclaiming, "Not as I will, but as thou wilt," His very attitude was in harmony with the solemn occasion. Ought we to be surprised, then, that He who spoke of heaven, came from heaven, ever did the work of heaven, should look "up to heaven"? Moreover, this act was eminently *instructive*. Christ was ever careful to teach that His power came from God. "The Son can do nothing himself but what

He seeth the Father do." "The words that I speak, I speak not of myself, but the Father who dwelleth in me, He doeth the work?" But, observe, Jesus could not inform the man about to be healed by word of mouth. He was deaf. What, therefore, He could not express by utterance, He conveyed by a deed. That the afflicted one before Him might understand that the restoration was not the result of magic or sorcery, the Great Physician "looked up to heaven," as if to say, "Thence cometh the power, from yonder do I receive the might whereby thou art to be made whole."

Thus far we think that the text is plain. But how strange does the second part appear! "He sighed." Sighed? when about to unstop deaf ears? Sighed when on the verge of opening the door by which the music of nature and the welcome sounds of the human voice would enter the hitherto silent regions within? Sighed when He was prepared to give power to the mute organ of speech? Why, we should rather have expected that He would have smiled, and "looking up to heaven," rejoiced. We do not sigh when engaged in a mission of mercy. Far from it. When we take loaves to the famishing, or money to the wretched bankrupt, we feel a throb of sacred delight. As we mark the pallid invalid get stronger and better, or as we visit asylums for the deaf and dumb in order to witness the compensations offered by us for the defects of nature, we are filled with grateful happiness. Why did the Master sigh?

The answer brings before us the most impressive and tragical feature in the Saviour's experience. *His whole life was a sigh.* He was always a man of sorrows. He was "acquainted with grief;" grief was His companion and associate. So utterly was this the case that we find Him mournful even when about to perform a miracle of great mercy! Just as there are dark spots on the bright sun, so even when suffused with celestial glory on the Mount of Transfiguration the awful cross made its appearance, for "they spake of His decease." Hardly had the cheerful hosannahs of the multitude died away when he "beheld the city and wept over it." To quote from Jeremy

Taylor, "This Jesus was like a rainbow ; half made of the glories of light, and half of the moisture of a cloud."

We speak often of Christ's sacrifice in a one-sided style. Too often we mean by His sufferings the death He endured. We think of Calvary. The accursed tree rises before our imaginations. All these were dreadful indeed, albeit they were not the sum but the consummation of His trials. They were the closing pages of a volume filled with like details. Before He died "He came to His own, and His own received Him not;" before He died He "endured the contradiction of sinners against himself;" before He died He was "despised and rejected of men." No more touching proof of this does the New Testament afford than the two words, "He sighed." He looked "up to heaven," and what saw He there? Crowns prepared for men who would not seek them ; thrones made ready for such as cared not to occupy them. No wonder that "He sighed." To compare the greater with the lesser, He felt as we might do if we beheld a capacious hospital replete with aid for the afflicted, while the latter, through some unaccountable infatuation, refused to enter it. As a certain writer remarks: "Yonder," the Redeemer seems to say, "is the home of my Father, of the cherubim and the seraphim. I would fain conduct to that home the race which I have made one with myself by so assuming their nature as to join it with the divine. I am about to work another miracle—that is, to make another effort to induce the rebellious to take me as their Leader to your glorious domain. But it will be fruitless ; I foresee but too certainly that I shall still be despised and rejected of men."

What ought we to learn from the Saviour's sigh? *A lesson of consolation.* Intense trouble seeks solitude. In great affliction men often wish to be alone. Even in inferior creatures something of this kind appears. The wounded deer retreats from the herd into the dark recesses of the forest. The whale, smitten by the harpoon, dives into the lowest depths of the sea. Human beings frequently prefer isolation when in trial. Peter "went out" when he saw the truth of his Master's

prediction, and "wept bitterly." Of Mary, bereaved so heavily, the friends near her said, "She went forth unto the grave to weep there." Was there anything akin to this in our Lord? There was. Even in minor matters of such an order He was made "in all points like unto His brethren." Where did He sigh? In company? In a crowd? No. We are distinctly informed He "took him (the deaf and dumb man) aside from the multitude. No one heard Him sigh, not even the afflicted man, for he was unable to do so. The sigh was between the Son and the Father. "Looking to *heaven*," not to earth, "He sighed." Let us be comforted in sorrow! These incidents clearly show how qualified the Great High Priest is to sympathise with His disciples. He was once as we are.

Is there not a *lesson of stimulus*? Jesus did more than sigh. He said "Ephphatha," and thus restored sound and speech to the sufferer before Him. The teaching is palpable—we must act as well as feel. Emotion is useless unless succeeded by effort. Sighing will never reform the world, regenerate humanity. You cannot sigh bread into the hungry, knowledge into the ignorant, comfort into the miserable, salvation into the lost. We must work! Our effort should be to bring men to Him whose "Ephphatha" can still heal and restore.

There is also a *lesson of caution*. It has been suggested by an able and eloquent divine, that possibly there were special reasons for sorrow on the part of Christ in reference to the man whom He healed. Perhaps the Redeemer foresaw that the bodily restoration would not lead to spiritual restoration, but that, on the other hand, the recovered one would make a bad use of the speech and hearing which had been given him. It may be that the Saviour, looking into the future, marked the lately deaf one deaf to God's voice and silent as to God's praises.

Do we never sin with the ear? Yes, we let the thief slander enter by that door. We are too prone to suspect the virtue and piety of others, especially if they are our superiors.

Do we never sin with the tongue? Alas, none is innocent herein. The golden rule has not yet brought our words into subjection to it. Well may we make the resolve, "I will keep my mouth with a bridle." Great cause have we to put up the prayer, "Keep the door of my lips." The grand thing is to have our hearts right, and then all will be well. Ears and tongue cannot seriously offend if the loss of Christ is supreme within. "Keep thine heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life? Filled with the divine grace which the Gospel reveals and promises, we shall at length be ushered into the presence of Jesus. He will come to meet us on the other side of death's stream, sighing no more, but "looking to heaven," and saying to its pearly gates, that we may enter, "Ephphatha, be opened!"

THOMAS R. STEVENSON.



Subject.—The Chief Interest of Man.

"But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you."—Matt. vi. 33.

WE see in the above words the chief good, the chief labour, and the chief security.

I. THE CHIEF GOOD. "The kingdom of God." In all ages of the world the question had been asked, "Who will show us any good?" but no one had been able to answer it satisfactorily till Christ came; He gives a satisfactory answer. It is this: the "kingdom of God, and his righteousness." This is the chief good, and as such should be the chief interest of man.

First: *The kingdom of God.* "The kingdom of God" here means the reign of truth and grace in the heart.

(1) *It is called God's kingdom in opposition to Satan's, and*
(2) *in opposition to the kingdoms of men.*

Secondly: *His righteousness.* His reign over man is just and right.

II. THE CHIEF LABOUR. "Seek ye the kingdom of God."

1. This is to be sought; it is to be had gratis, "without money and without price," but not without seeking. "Every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth."

2. *This is to be sought before anything else.* "Seek ye first." So it was under the old dispensation. "Ye shall eat neither bread, nor parched corn, nor green ears, until the selfsame day that ye have brought an offering unto your God." So it is also under the new dispensation. In the model prayer in the beginning of the chapter we have God and His cause first. "Hallowed be thy name: thy kingdom come."

3. *This is to be sought more than anything else.* It is clear from verse 24 that nothing can be on an equality with God and His kingdom. "No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and Mammon." Two ruling principles cannot be in the soul at the same time. It never was and never can be. God's kingdom and righteousness should have the preference.

III. THE CHIEF SECURITY. "And all these things shall be added unto you." 1. *The security of carefulness and economy.* Though Christianity is much more than carefulness and economy, still Christianity includes and promotes them. The Great Founder Himself taught His disciples the lesson of carefulness and economy in feeding five thousand men with five loaves and two fishes, so that there was a great deal more at the end than at the beginning. Still He commands His disciples to "gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost." Christianity teaches the maxim, "Waste not, want not."

2. *The security of promise.* Were it the promise of man we could not depend much upon it because it is so often broken, but when it is the promise of the God-man, "the man Christ Jesus," we can safely trust it. "For heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away."

3. *It is the security of a promise of the nearest relative.* Jesus Christ connects His Father and our Father with this promise

(ver. 32). "For your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things." There is no earthly father (worthy of the name) that would leave his child without the necessities of life if he could help it. "How much more shall your Father which is in heaven?" and He can help it. "All these things (therefore) shall be added unto you."

HENRY REES.

"Take ye away the stone."—St. John xi. 39.

SYMPATHISING friends, the broken-hearted sisters, and the weeping Saviour, stand around the silent grave. Jesus says, "Take ye," &c.

I. God requires man's co-operation as the condition of the bestowment of His blessings.

1st. Israel is at the Red Sea. Egyptians pursuing, mountains on either hand, and the raging sea in front. God says to Moses, "Reach hither thy rod and smite the waters." Had Moses cavilled, and said, "I misinterpret the voice that I hear; the act has no meaning, and cannot be the command of our God; I shall wait for a command in keeping with His Almighty mind"—what in the meantime would the Egyptians have been doing? What would have become of the Israelites? Would they ever have mounted the opposite bank and sung over the graves of their foes,—

"Sound the loud timbrel o'er Egypt's dark sea,
Jehovah has triumphed, His people are free"?

2. Again, in the borders of their home they are encamped at Gilgal. Land occupied by enemies. Jericho with its walls in the distance is the first scene of conflict. God says, "Go around the walls seven times, &c., and they shall fall." See them moving silently round. No weapons. No display. Simply obeying God. Proud spies from the top of the wall hurl sarcastic remarks and laugh them to scorn. The man

honestly obeying God can well afford to bear a laugh, marching forward to certain victory, and nothing the stars can do him a lasting damage. How speedily they changed faces. How were they cast down as in a . . . God's needed grace and help, and man honestly is duty, are never remote from each other.

Believest thou that I can? Go wash in the pool. Cast on the right side. Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, &c. The stone that God requires His people to take away. The stone of inconsistency. This lies upon the bosom of the Church, and through God will call dead souls to life. It is composed of a variety of smaller stones brought together and unitedly and severally bearing that name. 1st. The stone of worldliness not in keeping with our professed faith for the future. 2nd. Carelessly or not at all discharged of our duties. 3. Disregard to the danger of the unconverted. 4. Disregard of equity in dealing. 5. The absence of the spirit and mind of Christ in the life, &c.

God does for us what we cannot do for ourselves. Take heed. They put it there. Then Jesus said, Lazarus come forth. God's act alone. The next act falls within their power.

Loose him. If they had refused, what would have been of Lazarus? For aught we know, he might have lain back into his grave and died. Be that as it may, we get rid of the dreadful impression that many souls were awakened by the voice of God, and even sat up in their spiritual graves, but have fallen back and lapsed because there was no sympathy or encouragement from the Church to loose them and let them go.

Intends that by taking away the stones of everyday sin and duty His people shall have wisdom and moral strength to loose them, when He calls dead souls to life.

An unconverted friend, no being in the universe can move the stone but yourself. Not even God will take it

away the stone.

REV. THOMAS KELLY.

Biblical Criticism.

GALATIANS VI. 1—5.

Ἀδελφοί, ἐὰν καὶ προλημφθῇ ἄνθρωπος ἐν τινὶ παραπτώματι, ὑμεῖς αἱ πνευματικοὶ καταρτίζετε τὸν τοιοῦτον ἐν πνεύματι πραΰτητος, σκοπεῖν σεαυτὸν μὴ καὶ σὺ πειρασθῇς. ἀλλήλων τὰ βάρη βαστάζετε, καὶ οὕτως ἀνακληρώσεται τὸν νόμον τοῦ Χριστοῦ. εἰ γὰρ δοκεῖ τις εἶναι τι μὴδὲν ὄν, φρενακτεῖ ἑαυτὸν. τὸ δὲ ἔργον ἑαυτοῦ δοκιμαζέτω ἕκαστος, καὶ τότε εἰς ἑαυτὸν μόνον τὸ καίχημα ἔξει, καὶ οὐκ εἰς τὸν ἕτερον. ἕκαστος γὰρ τὸ ἴδιον φορτίον βαστάσσει.

“As brethren, I appeal to you. Act in a brotherly spirit. I have just charged you to shun vainglory, to shun provocation and envy. I ask you now to do more than this. I ask you to be gentle even to those whose guilt is flagrant. Do any of you profess to be spiritually minded? Then correct the offender in a spirit of tenderness. Correct and reinstate him. Remember your own weakness; reflect that you too may be tempted some day, and may stand in need of like forgiveness. Have sympathy one with another. Lend a ready hand in bearing your neighbours’ burdens. So doing you will fulfil the most perfect of all laws—the law of Christ. But if any one asserts his superiority, if any one exalts himself above others, he is nothing worth, he is a vain self-deceiver. Nay rather let each man test *his own work*. If this stands the test, then his boast will be his own, it will not depend on comparison with others. Each of us has his own duties, his own responsibilities. Each of us must carry his own load.”

1. ἀδελφοί] “*Brothers*.” “A whole argument lies hidden under this one word,” says Bengel. See iii. 15, iv. 12, and especially vi. 18.

The fervour and pathos of this appeal are perhaps to be explained by certain circumstances which engaged St. Paul’s attention at this time. A grave offence had been committed

in the Church of Corinth. St. Paul had called upon the Corinthian brethren to punish the offender; and his appeal had been promptly and zealously responded to. He had even to protest against undue severity, to interpose for the pardon of the guilty one. The remembrance of this incident still fresh on his mind may be supposed to have dictated the injunction in the text. The striking resemblance in his tone here to 2 Cor. ii. 6—8, where he is speaking of the Corinthian offender, bears out this conjecture. See the introduction, p. 53.

προλημφθῇ] “*be surprised, detected* in the act of committing any sin,” so that his guilt is placed beyond a doubt. For this sense of *προλαμβάνειν*, “to take by surprise, to overpower before one can escape,” see Wisd. xvii. 16, *προλημφθῆς τὴν δυσάλυστον ἔμμεν ἀνάγκην*: comp. *κατελήμφθη*, John viii. 4. The word cannot here mean “be betrayed into sin,” for neither will the preposition *ἐν* admit this meaning, nor is it well suited to the context.

ὁμοῖς οἱ πνευματικοί] St. Paul had once and again urged them to walk by the Spirit (vv. 16, 23). This explains the form of address here; “Ye who have taken my lesson to heart, ye who would indeed be guided by the Spirit.” Their readiness to forgive would be a test of their spirituality of mind. It might indeed be supposed that the Apostle was here addressing himself especially to the party of more liberal views, who had taken his side against the Judaizers, and in their opposition to ritualism were in danger of paying too little regard to the weaker brethren; comp. Rom. xv. 1, *ἡμεῖς οἱ δυνατοί*. In this case there would be a slight shade of irony in *πνευματικοί*. The Epistle however betrays no very distinct traces of the existence of such a party in the Galatian Churches (see v. 13), and indeed the context here is far too general to apply to them alone. For *οἱ πνευματικοί*, see 1 Cor. ii. 13, 15; iii. 1.

καταρτίσετε] “*correct, restore*.” The idea of punishment is quite subordinate to that of amendment in *καταρτίσετε*, which on this account is preferred here to *κολάζετε* or even *νοθετεῖτε*, though the latter occurs in a similar passage, 2 Thess. iii. 15, *μη ὡς ἐχθρὸν ἠγείσθε ἀλλὰ νοθετεῖτε ὡς ἀδελφόν*. It is used espe-

cially as a surgical term, of setting a bone or joint; see the passages in Wetstein on Matt. iv. 21.

ἐν πνεύματι πραΰτητος] Comp. 1 Cor. iv. 21, ἐν ἀγάπῃ πνεύματι τε πραΰτητος. Gentleness is a characteristic of true spirituality. By their conduct towards wrong-doers their claim to the title of πνευματικοί would be tested.

σκοπῶν] The transition from the plural to the singular gives the charge a direct personal application; "each one of you individually."

2. "If you must needs impose *burdens* on yourselves, let them be the burdens of mutual sympathy. If you must needs observe a *law*, let it be the law of Christ." The Apostle seems to have used both βάρη and νόμον (the latter certainly), with a reference to the ritualistic tendencies of the Galatians. For the idea of the *burden* of the Mosaic law, compare especially Luke xi. 46, φορτίζετε τοὺς ἀνθρώπους φορτία δυσβάστακτά, Acts xv. 10, ἐπιθεῖναι ζυγόν, ὃν οὐτε οἱ πατέρες ἡμῶν οὐτε ἡμεῖς ἰσχύσαμεν βαστάσαι, ver. 28, μηδὲν τλίον ἐπιτίθισθαι ὑμῖν βάρος. For the "law of Christ," always in contrast to the law of Moses, see 1 Cor. ix. 21, ἔννομος Χριστῷ, Rom. iii. 27, διὰ ποίου νόμου; τῶν ἔργων; οὐχί, ἀλλὰ διὰ νόμου πίστεως, viii. 2, ὁ νόμος τοῦ πνεύματος τῆς ζωῆς κ.τ.λ.; cf. James i. 25, ii. 12.

ἀλλήλων τὰ βάρη κ.τ.λ.] Cf. Matt. viii. 17; Rom. xv. 1, τὰ ἀσθενήματα τῶν ἀδυνάτων βαστάζειν, Ignat. Polyc. 1, πάντας βάσταζε ὡς σε ὁ Κύριος, and again, πάντων τοὺς νόσους βάσταζε, Epist. ad Diogn. § 10, ὅστις τὸ τοῦ πλησίον ἀναδέχεται βάρος. Here the position of ἀλλήλων is emphatic: "These are the burdens I would have you bear—not the vexatious ritual of the law, but your neighbour's errors and weaknesses, his sorrows and sufferings."

ἀναπληρώσετε] "*ye will rigorously fulfil*," the idea of completeness being contained in the preposition. It is difficult to decide here between the readings ἀναπληρώσετε and ἀναπληρώσατε, the external authority for either being nearly balanced. On the whole the preference may perhaps be given to ἀναπληρώσετε as having the versions for the most part in its favour, such testimony being in a case like the present less open to suspicion

than any other. On the other hand ἀναπληρώσατε makes excellent sense; the past tense, so far from being an objection, is its strongest recommendation; for this tense marks the completeness of the act, and thus adds to the force of the preposition, "fulfil the law *then and there*." See the passages in Winer, § xliii. p. 330.

τοῦ Χριστοῦ] is added in a manner παρὰ προσδοκίαν; "the law not of Moses but of Christ."

3. These words are connected with the first verse of the chapter, the second being an amplification of and inference from the first.

εἰ γὰρ δοκεῖ τις κ.τ.λ.] Comp. Plat. *Apol.* p. 41 E, εἰ δὲν δοκῶσί τι εἶναι μηδὲν ὄντες, Arrian, *Epict.* II. 24, δοκῶν μὲν τις εἶναι ὃν οὐδεὶς; and for οὐδὲν εἶναι, see 1 Cor. xiii. 2; 2 Cor. xii. 11.

μηδὲν ὄν] "*being nothing*," i.e., "seeing that he is nothing," not "if he is nothing," for the very fact of his thinking highly of himself condemns him. "His estimate," says Chrysostom, "is a leading proof of his vileness." In Christian morality self-esteem is vanity and vanity is nothingness. With the Christian it is "not I but the grace of God which is with me;" see 1 Cor. iii. 7; xv. 9, 10; 2 Cor. iii. 5.

φρεναπατᾷ] "*deceives by his fancies*," cf. Tit. i. 10, ματαιολόγοι καὶ φρεναπάται. More is implied by this word than by ἀπατᾷ, for it brings out the idea of *subjective fancies* and thus enforces the previous δοκεῖ. It was possibly coined by St. Paul, for it seems not to be found in any earlier writer, and at a later date occurs chiefly, if not solely, in ecclesiastical authors.

4. τὸ δὲ ἔργον αὐτοῦ] "*his own work*;" ἔργον, emphatic by its position, stands in contrast to δοκεῖ and φρεναπατᾷ; and this contrast is enhanced by the addition of αὐτοῦ.

δοκιμαστέω] "*let him test, examine*;" see the notes on 1 Thess. ii. 4; v. 21.

τὸ καύχημα] "*his ground for boasting*;" καύχημα is the matter of καύχησης; compare Rom. iii. 27 with iv. 2, and 2 Cor. i. 12, ἡ γὰρ καύχησης ἡμῶν αὕτη ἐστὶν κ.τ.λ. with i. 14, ὅτι καύχημα ὁμῶν ἐσμεν.

εἰς ἑαυτὸν κ.τ.λ.] “in himself and not by comparison with others.” “Probitas in re, non in collatione,” says Castalia. For the preposition compare Ephes. iii. 16, κραταίωθῆναι εἰς τὸ ἑαυτοῦ ἄνθρωπον, Rom. iv. 20; xv. 2; xvi. 6, etc.: Winer, § xlix. p. 416.


τὸν ἑταρον] “his neighbour.” For the article, compare Rom. ii. 1; xiii. 8; 1 Cor. vi. 1; x. 24, 29.

J. B. LIGHTFOOT, D.D.

The Preacher's Scrap Room.

SHORT ESSAYS.

SPONTANEOUS BENEFICENCE.

FTEN, in order to decide on the question of a man's generosity, you must first decide on the question of his forethought. A person may be lavish in giving, for the main reason that he does not realise the inconvenience which his act is likely to entail upon him in the future, and this not because his pity is so moved as to make him indifferent to personal considerations, but simply because he happens to be of an improvident habit of mind. The generosity would, of course, consist in his giving, notwithstanding that he realises the inconvenience which his act is likely to entail upon him in the future. But one would not have the heart to deny to the impulsively-beneficent man the credit of being accounted good-natured, if none but himself suffered for his hasty benevolence. Often, however, his unreflecting kindness involves the greatest unkindness. Such a man will give to some object which may happen at the moment to appeal to his sympathies, and entirely overlook the claims of far more deserving objects, just because they are not there present to his senses. Now, real generosity always acts in strict consonance with justice. An impulse it may be, but its dictates are never followed without the previous approval of the reason and the conscience. Therefore, to withhold is sometimes more generous than to bestow, because there may be more self-denial in resisting than in obeying the instincts of

pity. Self-denial is, after all, that which must determine a man's generosity ; so that there may be more genuine magnanimity in resigning to a new-comer your favourite seat in the railway train, or in foregoing, for the benefit of some member of your household, the first glance at the morning paper, than in building a hospital for the cure of men's bodies, or a church for the cure of men's souls.

THE SHALLOWNESS OF THE AGE.

The present is generally admitted to be a far more shallow age than any previous one ; the reasons of which may, probably, be the following :—We live in extraordinarily stirring, competitive times, when the daily effort to live at all makes such excessive demands upon our energies as to unfit us for but little else than satisfying those demands.

“ The world is too much with us ; late and soon,
Getting and spending, we lay waste our powers.”

Whereas, the less exciting, and less exhausting avocations of our forefathers left them free, if they chose, to spend their nights in the most abstruse studies.

Moreover, owing to the daily and weekly press, to the spread of good, cheap literature in general, to the increase of institutes, debating classes, lectures, and the like, a great deal of useful information can now be gained without much effort. Obtaining from these means a superficial knowledge of many things, a man with no other qualification may appear to tolerable advantage in society, and thus a great incentive to study—the feeling of inferiority to others—is removed. Formerly, in the absence of such advantages—for advantages they certainly are, though they may not always be productive of good—people who desired knowledge had really to toil for it, which effort in itself improved the mind almost as much as the knowledge obtained thereby. For the sole end of study is not to commit to memory facts. Further, in consequence of the multiplicity of new books that are forced upon our notice in these days, books many of which are very excellent, such inclination and leisure as we have for something better than mere desultory reading are liable to be devoted to the perusal of recent publications, to the neglect of the old classical works of our language, which were the chief delight of our fathers, and which no modern books should ever be allowed to replace.

THORNTON WELLS.

The Chief Founders of the Chief Faiths.

Around no men, amongst all the millions of mankind, does so much interest gather as around the Founders of the Chief Religious Faiths of the world. Such men are sometimes almost lost in the obscurity of remote ages, or of the mystery with which they surrounded themselves, or their early followers invested them. But whenever they can be discerned, their characters analysed, and their deeper experiences understood, they are found to be not only leaders and masters of the multitudes who have adopted more or less of their creed and ritual, but also interpreters (more or less partial) of the universal yearnings of the soul of man. Such men may have seemed to sit at the fountains of human thought and feeling, and to have directed or have coloured the mysterious streams, but they have quite as often indicated in their doctrines and in their deeds the strong courses of the thoughts and feeling which are more permanent and deeper than any one man or even any one age could completely discover. The aim of these papers will be, with necessary brevity, to review the chief of such men, noting suggestively rather than exhaustively, their *biography*, their *circumstances*, their *theology*, and their *ethics*. And in concluding the series it is purposed to compare and to contrast each and all of them with the "One Man whom in the long roll of ages we can love without disappointment, and worship without idolatry, the Man Christ Jesus."

PRINCIPAL BOOKS OF REFERENCE.—Max Müller's "History of Ancient Sanskrit Literature," "The Science of Language," "Chips from a German Workshop;" Rev. F. D. Maurice's "Religions of the World;" Archdeacon Hardwick's "Christ and other Masters;" Rev. J. W. Gardner's "Faiths of the World;" Miss Mary Carpenter's "Last Days of Rammohun Roy;" Rev. F. W. Farrar's "Witness of History to Christ;" Rev. A. W. Williamson's "Journey in North China;" Canon Liddon's Bampton Lecture on "Our Lord's Divinity;" Cousin's "History of Modern Philosophy."

No. I.

GAUTAMA BUDDHA.

(*Continued from page 229.*)

AFTER our necessarily concise notes upon the biography, the circumstances, and the theological opinions of Gautama Buddha, we propose now to review what is acknowledged to be the glory of his system; his science of morals, and so proceed to his

ETHICS.

Perhaps it is scarcely accurate to term his ethical doctrines a science of morals, for, as we have already seen in our glance

at his theological opinions, his creed lacked that definiteness that could afford any distinct basis, either as a standard or a motive, for a scientific system of morality. It has been said by one entitled to great authority, "It was a *practical*, and not a speculative philosophy, concerning itself not with God and the invisible, but with the charities and duties of the present life." However, its practical morality had a loftier tone than was heard in all other heathen systems, and doubtless in that tone we find "the secret of its mightiness, the key to its majestic progress in the whole of Eastern Asia," and that which has made his system one that Mr. Spence Hardy describes as having exercised "a mightier influence upon the world than the doctrines of any other uninspired author, in any age or country." As far as we are able to tabulate his moral doctrines, we conclude there are *five* prohibitions, which more or less clearly interdict what he stigmatises as the *ten* sins. These *five* prohibitions forbid—(α) killing any animal whatsoever, from the meanest insect up to man, (β) the commission of any theft, (γ) the violation of another man's wife or concubine, (δ) the uttering of any falsehood, (ε) the use of any wine or any intoxicating liquor or drug, as opium. The *ten* sins consist—(α) in the killing of animals, (β) theft, (γ) adultery, (δ) falsehood, (ε) discord, (θ) contumacious language, (ι) idle and superfluous talk, (κ) covetousness, (λ) envy or malice, (μ) following false gods. But over and above all these negative commands there is positive injunction to good works. This was not merely the practising of Dana, which consists in giving alms, but the cultivation of sympathy with sufferers, the sharing the calamities of others; such sympathy and such fellowship were as vividly traits in Gautama's own character, as they were precepts in his teaching. And here we are reminded that the group of gentler and more retiring virtues, such as meekness, resignation, patience, forgiveness, which are almost banished from the rest of heathendom, have a foremost place and special honour alike in the life and doctrine of Gautama Buddha. Such virtues, which often are counted as more womanly than

manly, were at once a moral fascination, and an unspeakable benefit to the tribes among whom they were promulgated, and whose notions of the heroic were savage and barbarous. Whilst, as we have said, there was no adequate motive in his system to supply a philosophy of morals, we should miss much of its meaning, and probably overlook one explanation of its success, if we did not ask why these five prohibitions were to be obeyed, why these ten sins were held as guilty, and why this spirit of well-doing to other men was to be cherished? The answer seems to be found in the ideal deliverance from all individuality, and indeed from all conscious existence, which, as we have seen, was held out by Gautama as the *summum bonum* of destiny. This hope would have its influence in procuring obedience to the five prohibitions, because the external organs of man seemed to be the only seat of evil, and the single foe of mankind. Hence whatever, by asceticism and denial of physical appetite, would restrain the passions and mortify the lusts, would tend to lessen the power of the flesh, and would liberate the spirit for the contemplation of the destiny of "Nirvana," that is, Nothing, to which Buddha aspired, and which he predicted for his true followers. And the hope of this destiny would have its influence in procuring obedience to his benevolent and humane precepts, because nothing would more effectually promote extrication from the bonds of individuality than the complete self-denial and self-forgetfulness of sacrifice and restraint. It is not difficult to grasp the conception, that by compelling the body to be lost in the spirit, and training the spirit of the individual to be lost in the needs of its fellows, there would surely be some progress made towards destroying the consciousness of one's own individuality which this great, tender-hearted, melancholy, earnest man felt to be the dark curse of human life.

Bristol.

URIJAH R. THOMAS.

The Preacher's Finger-Post.

SKETCHES FROM GENESIS (28). PARTIALITY IN THE FAMILY.

"Now Israel loved Joseph more than all his children, because he was the son of his old age : and he made him a coat of many colours," &c.—Chap. xxxvii. 3.

In these words we have a family scene ; the curtain is slightly lifted so as to enable us to see the paternal feeling of Jacob towards his children ; he loved all his children, but the preference is given to Joseph ; he loved him more than all the other children ; he was partial towards this son of his old age. We offer the following remarks on this partiality.

I. It was natural.

1. On account of a kindred spirit.

As far as the paternal feeling was concerned, it went forth towards all the children. Jacob's counsel and help were at the command of all, without exception, and his solicitude for their welfare was great. However, Joseph appears to be his pet child. It may be that Israel now began to feel the effects of old age creeping over his nature, and there is much truth in the old saying,

"Once a man, twice a child."

The childishness of old age might have had something to do with this partiality. Joseph's sentiments and feelings at this period were more akin to those of his father than any other member of the family. Benjamin was only about a twelvemonth old, and the other children somewhat older than Joseph. Besides, he had been at home with his father until now ; this naturally caused his father's affection to entwine itself around him. Another reason for this partiality was the kindred feeling and respect for holiness of character. Jacob during his early days had speculated a good deal, and the punishments inflicted upon him for his dishonesty and deceitfulness had had their due effect upon his mind, and now in his old age he was ripening for heaven. The lad also had true conceptions of the value and glory of a righteous character ; the report which he brought home of his brothers' doings proves this : so that the father and son were one in this respect, which oneness partly accounts for this partiality.

In families, and in various circles of society, we perceive the same thing in the present day; men have their favourites, it is but natural that this should be the case. We ought to love all men, because we are members of the same great family—God is our father, and Christ our brother; still, our love flows more freely towards some individuals than others. The father has his pet child, though it may not be revealed to others. When we come to examine the cause of this liking and disliking, this preference for the society of certain persons, we find that a kindred spirit forms an ingredient in it.

2. It was natural for Jacob to love Joseph more than the other children on account of pleasant associations.

He was the son of his beloved Rachel. It may be said, "So was Benjamin." True, but there were *sad* associations connected with his birth; the mother's life was taken away in bringing him into the world, and at this time Benjamin was not of age for the father to show any particular sign of his fondness for him. Associations cling to the mind; the sad and unpleasant are not welcomed, we seek to drive them away because they are painful; the pleasant we are fond of, and cherish them, inasmuch as they add to our

comfort and happiness in this life. Pleasant associations account for many a friendship; many a malignant foe has come with the intention of destroying the friendship and separating the friends, but in vain, the remembrance of former times and former kindness has kept the fire burning on the altar of the heart. Many a young man has had a fairer start in life than others, owing to the partiality of those who knew him, which arose from old associations connected with the young man's family; his father may have exerted himself on behalf of the inhabitants of the town at some remote period; this is remembered, and the son reaps the benefit.

II. This partiality was unconcealed.

1. It was revealed for the comfort of Joseph.

The love which Jacob had for his son could not be concealed any longer in the heart, it must find an outward expression. The coat was probably made when he was about to leave the tent to enter upon his shepherd life; if so, it was an opportunity not to be lost to convince the son of the father's love. This was a long coat with sleeves, "an upper coat reaching to the waists and ankles, such as noblemen and kings' daughters wore," not "a coat of many colours." Such a gar-

ment would be of material service to young Joseph when out on the hills looking after his father's flock. Our love for our *pets* will soon find a way to express itself, and that for the comfort and happiness of the loved one. This partiality for individuals cannot but take a pleasing form, though there are many modes of expressing it.

2. It was manifested in such a manner that the other children could take offence.

Though it was natural for the patriarch to feel a deep attachment towards the son of his old age, still it was indiscreet on his part to show it in this ostentatious manner. We can almost hear the brothers say, when they saw Joseph with this coat on, "We thought that the old man petted this Joseph when we were at home; that he gave him too much of his own way, and showed greater respect for him than for us who are doing the work; we cannot have the shadow of a doubt any longer upon the subject; our father cares but little about our comfort; if his *pet* child be comfortably and warmly clothed he is satisfied; and look upon the *cut* of the coat, is he going to crown him king over us, are we to be under the command of *this lad*?" Parents ought to be very judicious in their conduct towards their children: favouritism ought not

to be manifested; if the love goes in stronger and deeper currents towards one of the children than towards the rest, as the case often is, let the strictest guard be taken of the conduct, lest by acting towards him injudiciously the others should feel it too keenly. It is possible to damp the enthusiasm, decrease the courage, and destroy the self-respect of many a child by showing a strong partiality towards another. No act ought to be done to one whereby the others may be offended; such a deed may leave an injurious influence upon the mind of a young person which will be felt throughout the whole of his life.

III. This partiality produced hatred.

The brethren looked upon it as an insult hurled at them; their anger and animosity were roused; their brother was looked upon as a black sheep among them; "they hated him, and could not speak peaceably unto him."

1. Their hatred took a wrong direction.

They looked upon Joseph as the culpable person, instead of thinking that it was their father's deed. Joseph could not prevent his father clothing him thus; it was not *his* fault, and he could not well refuse this token of his father's affection, even if he

thought it would be offensive to his brothers. If hatred was to be manifested at all (which it certainly ought not to be) it ought to have been shown towards their father, and not their brother. Men under the impulse of indignation have no time to look at things coolly and rationally; the mind is made up hastily on the subject, and it is vain to try to convince them that they are in the wrong. It is right for us to hate certain things, but we ought to inquire *what* we are to hate. Even the religious public are sometimes wrong in this matter: the crime of the individual was so great as to cover his humanity from the sight of most people, and *he* was hated instead of the *crime* committed. We are to hate sin with perfect hatred, nevertheless the *man* is to be loved.

2. Their hatred overcame their humanity.

Evidently it was unpleasant for them to see their brother so dressed, still he was their *brother*. Their own father was the cause of this mark of distinction, and they ought not to forget that this lad was a member of their family. However widely we may differ from others upon important matters, we must not give way to the worst passions of our nature; to cultivate an ill-feeling towards another is not the best way

of rectifying his mistakes, nor to have the cause of offence removed. These young men could not speak peaceably to their brother, their anger became so strong that they could not address to him the usual salutation, "Peace be unto you." The courtesy due to their fellow-creatures was withheld from him; their highest faculties were governed by the lowest, their noblest powers were in bondage for a time under the dominion of anger, jealousy, and the most inveterate hatred. We frequently see men under the effects of anger doing things against which their higher nature revolts; and some of them appear as if their manhood had gone and the devil had taken full and complete possession of them. Whatever the temptation or provocation may be, the passions ought to be under restraint; the man ought to be the master, and not the passions. To resemble Christ the old man must be crucified.

Falmouth.

CYMRU.

Subject: SELFISH PIETY.

"Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and show my people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins. Yet they seek me daily, and delight to know my ways, as a nation that did righteousness, and forsook not the ordinance of their God: they ask of me the ordinances of justice; they take delight in approaching to

Therefore have we fasted,
, and thou seest not?
have we afflicted our
thou takest no know-

Behold, in the days of
t ye find pleasure, and
your labours. Behold, ye
strife and debate, and to
h the fist of wickedness:
not fast as ye do this day,
your voice to be heard on
it such a fast that I have
a day for a man to afflict
is it to bow down his
a bulrush, and to spread
and ashes under him?
a call this a fast, and an
e day to the Lord?"—
iii. 1—5.

subject of these words
ish piety." The illus-
Burke called "man a
is animal," and truly
s within him a reli-
ement. All men are
is in some sense or
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of men have ever
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By the force of the
is element men have
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f the greatest enormi-
which the sun has
hone. Religion put
to death. In these
we have a sketch of a
ess, nay of a wicked
a religion that is
selfish. Selfish piety
popular piety of this
id land. The passage
ts three things con-
g it:

It is very EARNEST. Ac-
g to the description of

the piety of Israel at this
time it seems to have been
anything but a dull and in-
active power: it was very
busy.

First: It was earnest in
study. "They seek me daily,
and delight to know my
ways." A selfish piety
studies the Bible, often most
critically, and with great de-
votion, but it is not for love
of truth for its own sake or
a desire to know God's will
in order to do it, but for
some personal end: may be,
to support its own little crot-
chets, or to get some personal
comfort.

Secondly: It is earnest in
prayer. "They ask of me
the order of justice: they
take delight in approaching
to God." Some of the most
selfish men we have ever
known have been the most
praying men, the most ear-
nest advocates for prayer
meetings, and the most vehe-
ment in their supplications.
Selfishness is often very de-
vout, very prayerful, very
regular in attending the
public ordinances of religion.
In piety the object of selfish-
ness is not merely to get as
much of this world as possi-
ble, but to get to heaven.
This world is not good enough
for it: it is always thinking
of inheritances, crowns, man-
sions, and diadems.

Thirdly: It is earnest in
its *self sacrifices*. It goes
farther than studying and

praying: it endures fastings and self-mortifications. "Wherefore have we fasted," say they, "and thou seest not? Wherefore have we afflicted our souls, and thou takest no knowledge?" Selfish piety will afflict itself by fastings and painful pilgrimages, and will give not only its money for religious purposes, but even its own "body to be burned." Its grand object is to buy heaven, and to give for it as high a price as is demanded. We judge of the piety of our churches and country by the amount of contributions raised for religious purposes. False criterion this!

Fourthly: It is earnest in its *churchism*. "Ye fast for strife and debate, and to smite with the fist of wickedness." It would seem that the Israelites were divided into religious parties or factions, some professing to be more orthodox than others. There was a rivalry, therefore, in their devotion; one tried to excel the other, and the competition ran so high that they began to "smite each other with the fist." Selfish piety is always full of denominational zeal. "The temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord are we."

Fifthly: It is earnest in its *professions*. They made "their voice to be heard on high." There was great parade and show in their

prayers and their songs; they raise their voices high that all may be impressed with the greatness of their devotions. Selfish piety always likes parade and great demonstration.

II. It is terribly **REPREHENSIBLE**. The prophet is here called upon to "Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and shew My people their transgressions." It is the duty of all true men in all churches to raise their voices high as the clarion blast against the selfish piety that abounds. Why denounce it?

First: It is an *insult to God*. "He abhors the sacrifice where not the heart is found." This selfish piety is the most abhorrent of all impieties. What does the Omniscient say of selfish pietists? "With their mouth they show much love, but their heart goeth after covetousness" (Ezekiel xxxiii. 31). Again, "this people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honour me with their lips, but their heart is far from me."

Secondly: It is *pernicious to souls*. This selfish piety inflicts incalculable injury upon its possessor: it warps the judgment, it deadens the conscience, it awakens false hopes, generates diseased affections, and dehumanises the man. Nor is the injury confined to the possessor him-

self, its influence upon others is most deleterious and destructive. It gives to society abhorrent ideas of God, false views of moral obligation, and makes it oftentimes the victim of priestcraft and superstition. Oh! for men in our churches—men like Elijah, John the Baptist, and Luther, that shall “cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet” against this selfish piety—men who shall make all Christendom reverberate with their terrible fulminations.

III. It is **SANCTIMONIOUSLY SOLEMN.** The selfish pietist is one referred to in the passage, who shall “bow down his head as a bulrush, and spread sackcloth and ashes under him.” It is natural for a man in deep sorrow to droop his head, and in deep grief in the East men wore sackcloth, as we wear crape, to symbolise the inward distress. No harm in that, where the grief is real; but in the case of the selfishly pious all this is pretence. It is a theatrical sadness and gloom. Are not the faithful expressions of genuine piety cheerfulness and sunshine? The selfish soul must, in the nature of things, be more or less unhappy, and deeply is it assured by its conscience that it ought to be so. Hence it robes itself in the garb of sadness. This mock, seriousness in connection with reli-

gion, which springs evermore from a selfish heart, has been prevalent in all ages, and has ever been one of the foulest winds that breathes in human society.

CONCLUSION. I ask no man whether he is pious. All have the pious instinct, which moves them at times to some kind of serious thought and devout feeling. What I ask is, how is this pious instinct working? Does it work by selfish hope and fear, or by love, generous and Christly? Is it taken up with its own personal interests, or engrossed in adoring love with the supremely good? “I would so live,” said Seneca, “as if I knew I received my being but for the benefit of others.” God help us all thus to live!

Subject: THE GOSPEL AGE.

“In these last days this is what was spoken by the prophet,” &c., &c.
—Acts ii. 16—20.


Four things taught here determine the Gospel age. I. It is connected with an **EXTRAORDINARY** effusion of the divine spirit, “I will pour out my spirit.” II. It is connected with **PRODIGIOUS** REVOLUTIONS, “I will show wonders,” &c. III. It is connected with an **ULTIMATE** CRISIS, “The notable day of the Lord.” IV. It is connected with the possibility of a **UNIVERSAL SALVATION**, “Whosoever,” &c.

Pity of Renowned Sermons.

No. XXVI.—HORACE BUSHNELL, D.D.

Subject : LIBERTY AND DISCIPLINE.

"Fury is not in me : who would set the briers and thorns against me in battle ? I would go through them, I would burn them together. Or let him take hold of my strength, that he may make peace with me ; and he shall make peace with me."—Isaiah xxvii. 4, 5.

 **AMONG** the many and various creatures composing the animal kingdom we find some which, from their peculiar characteristics, are looked upon as man's natural enemies, and, as such, are often used as symbols of tyrannical and wicked men. The writers of the Bible, who always drew their illustrations from the surroundings of the people to whom they spoke, often used the wild animals known in their land as emblems of the oppressors of the people of God, and Isaiah does so in the verses leading up to the text. Judgment is there declared against leviathan and the dragon, words which, with whatever creatures we may connect them, were doubtless familiar to the people to whom he first addressed his prophecy, and were symbols, either of the enemies of Israel generally, or of Sennacherib and Nebuchadnezzar in particular.

Supposing the prophecy to refer to the latter, the "that day" of the first verse is the day of the Jewish deliverance from Babylon, their day of mercy. But the day of mercy to the restored people was to be a day of judgment to their oppressors, unless they, accepting the conditions of peace, included themselves among the objects of Divine forgiveness. The text expresses the preference of God for forgiveness rather than for punishment, and the conditions of that forgiveness;

but, at the same time, the utter overthrow of all who continue in opposition to His will. It suggests—

I.

A blessed absence in the nature of God, "Fury is not in me." Fury seems to be *uncontrolled* and *uncontrollable* anger. A vessel in a storm, with its rudder gone or its screw broken, is passive in the power of winds and waves. A lion, who for hours has been disappointed of his prey, is passive under the dominion of his hunger. In both cases no influence, internal or external, is able to resist the onward course. And when a man is so in the hand of anger that no consideration from within or intercession from without can modify him, when he is passive in its power, he is in a state of *fury*. But no such state is possible to our God. His anger is, always under control, He is always the Lord God, abundant in goodness and truth, and we have also plentiful evidence that, in the height of His displeasure, He is accessible to intercession on behalf of His creatures. In proof of the former, witness how the Son of God ends his woes against "Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites," with "O Jerusalem, how often would I have gathered thy children together," and, for the latter, recall the effect of Abram's pleading for Sodom, and that of Moses for unbelieving Israel, Numb. xiv. The declaration of the text has been abundantly verified in all ages. Nevertheless,

II.

This blessed absence in the nature of God is compatible with contention with the unrepenting. "Who would set the briers and thorns against me in battle?" &c. Imagine a father and son at variance, the father being in the right and the son in the wrong. There are two ways of reconciliation: either the son must comply with the conditions of the father, or the father must lower his standard to the level of the son. But what a wrong would the father do to himself, his family, and society if he

were to adopt this course. He ought not, will not. If the son resolves to fight it out, reconciliation is impossible. This is the relative position of God and the ungodly man. God declares His conditions, "Let the wicked forsake his way," &c. Consider what is involved in the conditions of the ungodly. Nothing less than the inversion of the whole moral law. "Thou mayest worship other gods, mayest steal, commit adultery," and so on, instead of "Thou shalt not." In other words, God must change His character, and so do most terrible wrong to His own nature and to that of His creatures. Reason says, "He ought not," Conscience says, "He will not," God says, "I am Jehovah, I change not." It is a blessed impossibility. But the unrepentant man ought, can, must! If not, the fire of goodness must be set against the briars of wickedness, a contest as hopeless, and of which the issue is as certain, as that of the devouring flame with briars and thorns.

CONCLUSION. The absence of fury in God leads Him to prefer pardon to punishment, and to provide means for the former. "Let him take hold of my strength," &c. Men, churches, and nations are lovers of peace in proportion as they are righteous, Ps. lxxii. 3. The preference of God for peace depends upon the very attribute of which the ungodly would rob Him—viz., His righteousness. What is God's strength? How take hold of it? When a man falls overboard at sea, the appointed means of rescue is the life-belt which is thrown to him. Seizing that, he takes hold of the strength of the vessel to save him. When the man-slayer, fleeing from the avenger of blood, entered the city of refuge, he took hold of God's appointed means of shelter. God's strength is His pardoning prerogative, exercised to us through Christ, the "arm," or "strength," of the Lord. See how Moses takes hold of it, Numb. xiv. 19. And the prodigal, Luke xv. 21. "Being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ."

Camberwell.

W. HARRIS.

Seeds of Sermons from the Minor Prophets.

If the Bible as a whole is inspired, it is of vast importance that all its Divine ideas should be brought to bear upon the living world of men. Though the pulpit is the organ Divinely intended for this work, it has been doing it hitherto in a miserably partial and restricted method. It selects isolated passages, and leaves whole chapters and books for the most part untouched. Its conduct to the Minor Prophets may be taken as a case in point. How seldom are they resorted to for texts, and yet they abound with splendid passages throbbing with Divine ideas. It is our purpose to go through this section of the Holy Word; selecting, however, only such verses in each chapter and book as seem the most suggestive of truths, of the most vital interest, and universal application.

We begin with HOSEA. The remembrance of some facts connected with this man will greatly help us in our endeavours to reach the meaning and feel the power of certain of his utterances. He was a native of Israel, and lived in Samaria about 700 or 800 years B.C. His prophecy seems to have embraced a period of about 60 years, from Jeroboam's death to Hezekiah's ascension to the throne. He was contemporary with Isaiah, and preceded Joel, Jonah, and Amos. His prophecies are directed almost exclusively to the ten tribes who had sunk into the deepest idolatry. His style, as a writer, is very peculiar. "It is," says De Witte, "abrupt, unrounded, and ebullient, his rhythm hard leaping and violent." Like a bee he has been said to fly from one flower to another, to suck the honey from all the blossoms.

HOSEA.

No. XVII.

Subject : NATURALNESS OF RETRIBUTION.

"Also, oh Judah, he hath set an harvest for thee."—Hosea vi. 8.

Dr. Henderson ends the chapter with this clause and begins the next chapter with the latter clause of this verse. Some regard the harvest here as 'used in a good sense, as pointing to the ingathering of the people of God. But such a view is scarcely admissible. It evidently refers to punishment, and some suppose to that terrible punishment that fell on Judah as recorded in 2 Chron. xxviii. 6—9. Divine punishment for sin is elsewhere spoken of as a harvest, "Put ye in the

sickle, for the harvest is ripe: come, and get you down, for the press is full, the fats overflow; for their wickedness is great."

"Another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to him that sat on the cloud, Thrust in thy sickle, and reap: for the time is come for thee to reap; for the harvest of the earth is ripe."

The imagery suggests:

I. That retribution is natural in its SEASON. There are the "appointed weeks of harvest." These weeks come round with an undeviating regularity, and they come because the Immutabile One has decreed their advent. "Seed time and harvest shall not fail." Punishment comes to the sinner naturally, so far as the proper time is concerned. *In this life the sinner*

has many harvests. Every transgression is a seed, and the seed sometimes grows rapidly and ripens fast. In truth, to some extent, man reaps to-day morally what he sowed yesterday; not the *whole* crop, it is true, for every sin is awfully prolific, but some portion. The law of memory, habit, causation, render this constant reaping inevitable. No man can do a wrong thing any where or any when, without its bringing to him sooner or later a harvest, even in this life. But in the after-world there is a *full* and complete harvest. All the sins committed are there ripened into crops of correspondent miseries. Yonder is the harvest; there is the reaping—reaping—reaping, and little less than reaping for ever. The wicked there reap “the fruit of their own doings.” The imagery here suggests—

II. That retribution is natural in its RESULTS. In harvest, the man reaps the *kind* of seed he has sown, whatever it may be, barley or wheat. Also as a rule the *amount*; if he has sown sparingly he reaps sparingly, if with abundance he will reap abundantly. He gets what he wrought for. It is just so in the retributive ministry of God, “Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.” The cheat shall be cheated, the oppressor shall be oppressed, the malicious shall be hated. “With what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again.” The sinner in every pang of suffering will recognise the fruit of some sinful act of his. He will feel evermore that his misery has grown out of such a sin, and this out of

that, and so on. Hence he will never be able to blame either God or His creation for his wretched destiny, he reaps “the fruit of his own doings.” The imagery here suggests—

III. The retribution is natural in its APPROACH. As soon as the seed is sown and germination begins, it proceeds slowly and silently from day to day, week to week, and month to month, towards maturation, its harvest state. It is just so with sin, it proceeds naturally to work out its results, “Lust, when it is conceived, bringeth forth sin; sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.”

Punishment for sin does not require the positive and direct interposition of eternal justice: it comes—comes as the harvest comes—comes by the established laws of the moral universe. In truth, sin is more certain to ripen than the seed of the husbandman. Ungenial soil, foul weather, nipping frosts, scorching rays, destructive insects, may destroy the seed in the ground, so that it may never spring even to blade. But sin, unless uprooted by God's redemptive hand, cannot be destroyed, must grow, and ripen into a harvest of misery. “Be sure your sins will find you out.”

“Though the mills of God grind slowly,
Yet they grind exceeding small;
Though with patience He stands waiting,
With exactness grinds He all.”
—Longfellow.

No. XVIII.

Subject: GOD'S REMEMBRANCE OF SIN.

"And they consider not in their hearts that I remember all their wickedness; now their own doings have beset them about; they are before my face. They make the king glad with their wickedness, and the princes with their lies."—Hosea vii. 2, 3.

These words contain three facts:—

I. That God REMEMBERS men's sins. "I remember all their wickedness." This is a *wonderful* fact. When we think of the Infinite greatness of Him to whom the universe is as nothing, we are struck at first with amazement that God remembers the sins of a creature so frail, so insignificant as man. Still, as we reflect, we soon get the conviction that there is nothing absurd, nothing unreasonable in the fact. To the Infinite there is nothing great or small; to the Omniscient there is nothing unobserved; to the Holy there is nothing so arresting, so oppressive as sin. Sin is no trifle in the eye of Him whose glory is His holiness. This is not only a wonderful, but a *solemn* fact. God not only observes and knows my sins, but He remembers them—does not lose sight of one. They are in His memory. What a book is the memory of God! The whole history of the universe is there! Every sin that has ever been committed by any moral intelligence in the creation, however insignificant, has record there. "Thou art acquainted with all my ways, for there is not a word in my tongue, but Thou, Lord,

art acquainted with it altogether." "Doth not he see all my ways and count all my steps. All things are naked and open unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do." "Hell is naked before him, and destruction hath no covering." "How much, then, the hearts of the children of men." How useless the attempt to dissemble our sins from Him! How awful the revelations of the last day! Another fact these words contain is—

II. MEN DISREGARD God's remembrance of their sins. "They consider not in their hearts that I remember all their wickedness." "They say, The Lord shall not see, neither shall the God of Jacob regard it." Sinners, the world over, are indifferent to this fact. So far from considering that all their sins are in the memory of the Holy and Just One, they practically ignore His very existence. In their plans, engagements, and avocations, they take no account of Him. Why do they not consider? Is it because the thought strikes them as so manifestly improbable as not worthy of their attention? Assuredly not. They have only to reflect on this subject to see that it must be so. Why, then?—

First. Because *other thoughts engross their minds*—thoughts of worldly wealth and power—thoughts of selfish gains and sensual pleasures. They are too full of vain and worldly thoughts to admit an idea so grand and solemn as this.

Secondly. Because this thought, if it occurs to them for a moment, is *too painful* to

be entertained. The corrupt nature revolts from it, expels it the moment it gains admission, and bolts every door against it, environs itself with associations that keep it far away in the distance. "It desires not a knowledge of it." Another fact these words contain is—

III. That men's disregard of God's remembrance of their sins LEADS THEM TO REVEL IN INIQUITY. "Now their own doings have beset them about; they are before my face." Here we have their sins—

First. In *general*. They are abundant and daring. Their sins encompass them on all sides, and they perpetrate them without shame under the very face of God Himself; they give full play to all their passions, an unbridled licence to all their sinful impulses and lusts. Here we have their sins—

Secondly. In *particular*. Some of their sins are specified here. "They make the king glad with their wickedness and the princes with their lies."

"It pleases them," says an old writer, "to see the people conform to their wicked laws and examples in their worship of their idols, and other instances of impiety and immorality, and to hear them flatter and applaud them in their wicked ways. When Herod saw that his wickedness pleased the people he proceeded further in it. Much more will the people do so when they see that it pleases the prince." Acts xii. 3. Particularly, they made them glad with *their lies*, with the lying praises with which they crowned the favourites of the prince, and the lying calumnies and censures with which they blackened those whom they knew the princes had a dislike to. Those who show themselves pleased with slanders and ill-natured stories shall never want those about them who fill their ears with stories. Prov. xxix. 12. "*If a ruler hearken to lies, all his servants are wicked*," and will make him glad with their lies.

The Pulpit and its Handmaids.

ORIGINAL SIMILITUDES.

PREDESTINATION.—"Let the naturalist search through all the endless species of animal life, let him take the microscope, and will he find one single creature amongst the smallest, of which he can say, This little creature was evident-

ly made to suffer, was organised for misery—is a vessel built for dishonour? No, God could have made such creatures, but He has never done so. There is no Divine decree which requires your ruin—you are not predestinated to damnation. If you

are lost it is because you act against, not with, the Divine plan."

CHARACTER. — "The finest attributes of character, like the stars, are only seen at night. In the history of true men, when the sun of prosperity goes down, the brightest orbs of virtue come out to light up the moral firmament of the soul. It is when the aromatic plants are pressed that they fill the air with their sweet odours. After men have nobly endured trials, the world canonises them."

LOVE TO GOD.—"This in the soul is as necessary to bind all its impulses, sensibilities, and powers together in harmony, as attraction is in the material universe to unite all the atoms, globes, and systems together in one majestic whole."

SOCIETY.—"Man without social influences would be a grain without germination. Society is to our souls what soil and air, showers and sunbeams, are to the grain—the conditions of quickening and of growth."

GOD THE SUN OF SOULS.—"There are seeds of truths in the mind—some, perhaps, inbred, and more imparted—but these germs will remain dead for ever unless the soul is brought periodically into conscious contact with God, the central sun of truth."

SOLITUDE.—"As the bee turns the bitterest herb to sweetness, so the soul in devout solitude can turn the worst things to the best account. It is said of Moses 'That the skin of his face shone while he talked

with God.' But in seasons of devout solitude, our whole nature may grow luminous, and every phase of our character coruscate with 'the deep things of the Spirit.' It is beneath the earth's green mantle, in secret and silence amongst the roots, that the trees of the forest turn the elements of nature to their own advantage. And it is down in the quiet depths of spiritual realities, alone with God, that the soul turns this world to its use."

LOVE.—"Love is the soul of courage. There is no power on this earth either for endurance or brave deeds equal to that of calm, tender, womanly affection. Such love you can trust. The thing that is called love, which comes out in florid utterances, in spasmodic effort, you cannot trust; it is all sound and show. It is the quiet love, like that of contemplative John and of those unassuming women at the Cross, that you can rely on. Such love clings to its object as the ivy to the old castle; green and fresh it will remain, amidst the scorching of summer and the blasts of winter. It will survive the ruin of the object it embraces, conceal the ravages which time or fortune may make on it, and spread a beauty over its grave."

TRUTH AND LOVE.—"Humanity, as a whole, is but a body with many members: for the body to move on and upward, it is required that each member should fulfil its function. This function is the contribution to the general stock

...from every brain, every noble sentiment from every heart, every honest word and deed, serves to augment these elevating forces of the world."

MAN FALLEN.—"Humanity is a moral wreck. The ship, once a perfect whole, gliding serenely on the sunny wave of virtue, is now shattered to pieces, and the parts violently jostling against each other on the foaming billows of depravity."

SOUL GROWTH.—"There is nothing so beautiful as the growth of a soul. The growth of a flower rising from the earth, budding into vigour, multiplying its leaves, and blossoming into perfection, is beautiful. The growth of a child, passing from stage to stage, unfolding new powers every year, until it stands upon the platform of a perfect man, is beautiful. The growth of an empire rising from a barbarous horde, widening its territory, and progressing in civilisation until it takes its place among the nations, is beautiful."

field of life, drop a seed or two, and then pass away. Humility becometh us."

NO GOOD EFFORT LOST.—"The smallest effort is not lost. The coral insect that labours for an hour down in the depths of the ocean and dies, labours not in vain; others appear, begin where it left off, and thus the work goes on, until in the course of ages there rises above the vast solitary wilderness of dashing waves, an island-world beautiful as Eden. Thus from the humblest labours of honest souls there will one day rise from the deep, turbid, and turbulent sea of earth's depravity, a new world of moral beauty and blessedness."

SOUL PLANETS.—"Souls should be to God what planets are to the sun. Catch his glowing beams, and then fling the radiance on the whole sphere in which they move."

WORSHIP.—"Nature is a temple furnished with all the apparatus of worship. All the elements to awaken devotion are in it. But without mind there is no one to bend the knee, feel the inspiration, or sound the notes of praise."

HARMONY.—"Nature's ten thousand cadences give no idea of Divine harmony equal to that which springs from a soul reconciled to itself, and dwelling in the calm serenity of love. As I see the ocean in a dewdrop, and the sun in a particle of light, I see God in man."

"**HONEST SCEPTICISM** is better than technical sainthood.

The bulk of mankind are either too weak or too indolent in soul, ever to get into a state of doubting. Credulity is their weakness and their bane. The doubter therefore requires what Christ gave Thomas—special attention."

"**LOVE** in wrath is oil in flames."

"**THE** virtue of some men is but vice sleeping."

SOUL DISTURBANCES.—"Unbroken equanimity of soul is scarcely, if ever, to be found. Rarely passes there a day over any man without some adverse breeze sweeping over his spirit, raising the sea of thought and feeling into rough waves, if not into stormy billows. Outward providence to the human soul is something like the wind on the lake, ever rippling its surface, and often stirring its depths."

"**GREAT** sorrows like great loves court silence rather than speech."

DIVINE FORGETFULNESS.—"Those who say they forgive and cannot forget, lack the faculty of forgiveness; as yet Heaven has not endowed them with the power of granting absolution. It is of the very nature of love to hide injuries. Charity covereth sins. God has the power of forgetting injuries, because HE IS LOVE. I see the power of love in hiding injuries, working everywhere in nature. The sea hastens to cover up the wounds which ruthless ships have ploughed into its noble bosom; the tree bleeding with the sores which the woodman has inflic-

eye or memory the injuries it has received. How soon the love of a wife buries in forgetfulness any injuries she has received from the man she loves too well. The countless pains which the thoughtlessness and waywardness of children in their early days inflict upon the parental heart, are soon buried in the sea of parental love. Love digs in the heart of parents a grave for the wrongs, and builds a museum for the virtues of their children. All this is of God, is God-like. Infinite LOVE "passeth by the transgression." He leaves it behind Him as He proceeds in the majesty of His goodness to diffuse wider and wider for ever the blessedness of His own being."

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"HUMANITY is a tree, men and generations are but the leaves that grow upon its branches; the leaves have been falling for six thousand years, but the tree is as strong as ever. We are but leaves; some are fresher

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Homiletical Prebriaries.

No. LXII.

Subject: ST. JOHN—A SUBLIME CHARACTER.

"I, John, who also am your brother and companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was in the isle that is called Patmos, for the word of God and for the testimony of Jesus Christ."—Revelation i. 9.

Here we have four things. I. A character of distinguished excellence DESCRIBED. "I, John, also am your brother and companion in tribulation." The word "also" and the words "in the" are to be omitted. John here describes himself—(1) As a "brother;" his heart glows with a Christly fraternity for the good of all the churches throughout all the world. (2) As a sufferer; he is in "tribulation." The best men on earth are subject to suffering. He was a member of the kingdom of Christ, a loving, faithful, loyal subject of his spiritual empire—"the kingdom and patience (or rather endurance) of Jesus Christ." In that kingdom he was a companion with all who suffered—a fellow partaker of their tribulations. There has always been suffering in connection with the kingdom of Christ, and all the sufferers feel a blessed companionship. During the first hundred years persecutions in this kingdom were very sanguinary and severe. Here we have—II. A character of distinguished excellence banished by BLOODY PERSECUTORS. "In the isle called Patmos:" this was the scene of his banishment—a rocky island in the Mediterranean, about fifteen miles in circumference—a most wild, barren spot, a convict settlement whither the Romans banished all criminals—wretches they deemed unfit for liberty. On this desolate island, amidst the greatest villains of the age, this great character was banished. Strange that the Providence of Heaven should have allowed one of the most Christly men on the earth at that time to live for an hour in such a scene. But Patmos to John, and Patmos to the other residents, was a different place. To John it

and preached the "Word of Go

No. I

Subject: THE

"And from a child thou hast known
to make thee wise unto salvation."—

Observe—I. The REMARKABLE
tures. Timothy, we are informed
through his mother, Eunice, and
came acquainted with it. The
the intentions of the Scripture, s
of a child. The facts are facts c
and the intentions are the spirit
souls. It is theology that has ma
The child's heart is charmed wit
REDEEMPTIVE POWER of the Scriptu
thee wise unto salvation." The o
teach science or create sects, but "
tion." What is salvation? Restor
lost peace, lost usefulness.

God. His happiness is a "river"—pure, boundless, overflowing. It floods the universe. What is this river? In other words, what is the happiness of God? It involves four things: (1) An approving conscience; (2) A consciousness of security; (3) A loving nature; (4) A beneficent activity. God Himself would not be happy without these. These are the constituent elements in the river. Man must have these. Man's true happiness is participation in the happiness of God—"drink of thy pleasures." II. Divinity LEADS to its source. "Thou shalt make them drink of the river," &c. So far has the human soul gone away from this "river," away into the burning deserts of sin, that none but God can bring it back. This (1) He has done through Christ; (2) This He is doing through Christ; (3) This He will continue to do through Christ to the end of time. "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come, drink—come, drink at this river."

No. XLV.

Subject: GOD AS A REVEALER OF SECRETS.

"There is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets."—Dan. ii. 28.

Men have secrets, or what they *consider* secrets, for really there are no secrets in the universe, nor should there be such. Sin alone has secrets, virtue has none. With it, all is as open as the day. Looking at the Great One as the revealer of secrets, we observe—I. That He makes NO OMISSIONS. When men reveal the secrets of others, from ignorance they omit something; but God knows the whole—the most hidden thought of the most obscure mind in the universe. He knows; there is "nothing hidden from the Lord." II. He commits no MISTAKES. Men who reveal secrets, commit great errors; they either say too much or too little. Omniscience commits no blunders: the revelation will be severely faithful. III. He has no UNKINDNESS. Men often tell the secrets of others maliciously, but not so with Him. God is constantly revealing the secrets of men now—(1) Through the dictates of human consciences; (2) Through the unguarded actions of human life.

No. LXVI.

Subject: HUMAN FORGIVENESS.

"If any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye."—Col. iii. 13.

The world is rife with human quarrels: families, neighbourhoods, churches, have their quarrels. They arise from many principles in the depraved heart besides misunderstandings. Hence forgiveness is important. The text suggests two things concerning forgiveness. I. The DUTY of forgiveness. Here it is urged, as well as in other places (Rom. xii. 19). Beside this there are two reasons—(1) You desire forgiveness yourself. Who would like to have the vengeance of a man always in his heart towards him? If you would like forgiveness you must do to others as you would have others do unto you. (2) You need forgiveness yourself where you have offended. Lord Herbert has said, he that cannot forgive others breaks the bridge over which he himself has to pass. Besides an unforgiving spirit is an injury to its possessor. II. The MODEL of forgiveness. "Even as Christ forgave you." How did Christ forgive? Promptly, generously, fully. He forgave the offender without any reflection upon past offences. Examples: The woman taken in adultery—the thief upon the cross.

No. LXVII.

Subject: PLEASING GOD.

"Ye ought to walk and to please God."—1 Thess. iv. 1.

I. It is POSSIBLE. He has been pleased with men—he was pleased with Enoch, Noah, Daniel, &c. This is wonderful—wonderful that the Infinite should condescend to notice any one individual so insignificant as man. Still more wonderful that He should be pleased with anything that man can do. God is a pleasurable being, and even man can contribute something to His pleasure. II. It is INCUMBENT—"ye ought." Why? (1) Because He is the most absolute proprietor of your existence. He has a right to everything you have. (2) He is the most righteous of sovereigns. He does not require you to do anything that is not right and just. (3) He is the most tender of fathers. The only way to please yourselves is to please Him. He who does not please God will never please himself.

Literary Notices.

[We hold it to be the duty of an Editor either to give an early notice of the books sent to him for remark, or to return them at once to the Publisher. It is unjust to praise worthless books; it is robbery to retain unnoticed ones.]

THE REVIEWER'S CANON.

In every work regard the author's end,
Since none can compass more than they intend.

THE STRUCTURE OF THE OLD TESTAMENT: A SERIES OF POPULAR ESSAYS. By REV. STANLEY LEATHES, M.A. London: Hodder and Stoughton, 27, Paternoster Row.

THE preface explains the nature and object of this book. The words of the author are "that it is designed to set before ordinary English readers in a concise and popular form some of those facts concerning the composition of the Old Testament, a knowledge of which is indispensable to an intelligent appreciation of its contents, but of which the majority of such persons are more or less ignorant. An attempt has been made, in fact, to exhibit in an interesting manner what may be called the Natural History of the Old Testament. The lengthy and elaborate discussion of many of the points touched upon would therefore have been out of place; but as great care has been taken to avoid over statement and to place the argument in such a light as to make it independent of everything which may not be regarded as reasonably certain, it is hoped that the inferences suggested rather than enforced may be thought reasonable too, and may tend to show the essential difference in kind which distinguishes the elder volume of Revelation from all similar productions. The following chapters were originally intended for oral delivery as lectures, but the occasion for so delivering them accidentally fell through: and this circumstance may account for traces here and there of a greater directness of address than is usual in writings of the essay kind." The volume consists of five chapters, the titles of which are:—"The Characteristics of the Old Testament," "The Historic Element," "The Prophetic Element," "The Poetic Element," and "The Legal Element." These subjects are treated by a philosopher, scholar, and Christian, and they appear therefore in aspects that will at once interest, instruct, and suggest trains of healthful thinking.

THE WOMEN OF METHODISM; MEMOIRS OF ITS THREE FOUNDRESSES.
By ABEL STEVENS, LL.D. London: William Tegg.

A BRIGHT LIGHT IN A DARK PLACE, OR EMINENT PIETY IN THE BLACK COUNTRY AS EXEMPLIFIED IN THE LIFE OF MRS. PHILIP LLOYD. By FREDERICK ANDREWS. London: George Lamb; St. George's-in-the-East.

WE put these two volumes together because they both treat of pious women, and women belonging to the great Wealeyan body. The work of Dr. Stevens on the "Women of Methodism" will be read by thousands with great interest, for it is truly an interesting book. It is graced with the portrait of the illustrious mother of the great John Wesley—a man who, in our judgment, approached nearer to St. Paul than any man who ever lived. Judging from her portrait, her *personelle* must have been most captivating, and her countenance divine.

The work of Mr. Andrews, "A Bright Light in a Dark Place," treats of a humbler life, and has humbler pretensions. He has also given a portrait of his heroine, who seems to have been a woman of great piety and devotion. Her life is worth studying. Would that such lives were multiplied a million-fold! Mr. Andrews has written as one who studies human nature in its spiritual and imperishable relationships, and who estimates the dignity of a human being only just so far as it exemplifies the spirit and embodies the principles of the great Son of Man. He has written in a reverent spirit and with a literary taste and ability of no mean order.

SOCIAL ECONOMY. By J. E. T. ROGERS, M.A. Cassell, Petter, and Galpin.

THIS is one of Messrs. Cassell's cheap handbooks; and, like every volume of the series to which it belongs, is a most useful little work. It is designed chiefly for the young; and, in the simplest language—but with the accuracy which one would naturally expect from a writer of Professor Rogers's reputation—it treats on such subjects as the following, among others, viz., "Money," "Public Education," "Poor Laws," "Emigration," "Variety of Employment," "The Work of Government," "Taxes," "The Punishment of Crime," &c., &c.

Adapted principally, as we have said, to the capacities of juveniles, Professor Rogers's little book nevertheless contains information which the generality of adults would find both interesting and instructive.

PRESENT ISSUES: OR, FACTS OBSERVABLE IN THE CONSCIOUSNESS OF THE AGE. By Rev. ROBERT WITHERS MEMMINGER. London: Hodder and Stoughton, 27, Paternoster Row.

THE subjects of this volume are—"The Church as an Establishment Essentially Human," "Sacerdotalism," "Christianity and *Æsthetics*, or the Christian Cultus," "The Pulpit: its Relation to Society and its Duty," "Universalism and Calvinism," "Civilisation and Devil-worship." A sentence or two from the introduction will indicate the character, thinking, and style of this book. "There are many fields upon which the thinker may direct his powers of observation. If in thoughtfulness he turns his observation towards the heavenly bodies, he is an astronomer. If he look at nature and reflect upon what he observes, then he is a scientist, or perhaps an artist. If he look at God he becomes a theologian. If he observe himself looking inwards, examining the facts of his own consciousness, he is a psychologist, a moralist, or a metaphysician. A psychologist if he confine his attention to operations within; a moralist if he observe and reflect upon the facts connected with conscience. A metaphysician if he occupy himself in reflecting upon those ideas and abstractions which in introspection he comes in contact with. But besides all these fields of observation there is yet another, and just as real as any of the preceding. Society, as a whole, is truly an existence, a reality as is the individual man." Although there are many things in this volume which we cannot endorse, and some things which we regard as pernicious, we cannot withhold our testimony to its high intellectual merits. It is the production of no ordinary man,—it abounds with thoughts original, profound, and quickening. The spirit is earnest and reverent, the style clear and interesting.

SELECT PARABLES FROM NATURE. By Mrs. ALFRED GATTY.
Bell and Daldy.

THIS, too, is a book which is chiefly designed for the young, by that queen of writers for children, Mrs. Gatty, whose name alone recommends the work better than any words of ours can do so. We feel obliged, however, to state that we have read some of the fables with real enjoyment, although we do not happen to belong to that privileged class for whom they were especially intended. Throughout, the style is charming, particularly in the colloquial passages, and each fable is designed to illustrate and inculcate, which it does in the most unobtrusive and effectual manner, some great moral truth. We can cordially recommend the book to parents and teachers.

PLAIN PULPIT TALK. By THOMAS COOPER. London: Hodder and Stoughton, 27, Paternoster Row.—JOHN WHOM JESUS LOVED. By JAMES CULROSS, D.D. London: Elliot Stock, Paternoster Row.—TWELVE SERMONS. By WILLIAM MCKAY. Glasgow: Robert Lindsay, 146, Queen Street.

"PLAIN PULPIT TALK."—We are glad to receive this volume—very glad. Years ago when we were young we read some of the author's productions when he was an avowed disbeliever in the divinity of the Bible. They shook a little our confidence and sorely tried our faith. Right glad and truly thankful are we to know that after struggling through the dark regions of infidelity he has reached the true region of light, and is a firm believer in, and advocate of, the faith he once denied. These are scarcely sermons in a conventional sense. They are too elastic and colloquial, and we may almost say, vigorous. We heartily commend the book.

"JOHN WHOM JESUS LOVED."—Dr. Culross is always deeply and calmly thoughtful. Hence in his discourses we look in vain for the startling and sensational. Every point he touches he invests with interest, and often gives life to a dead truth.

"TWELVE SERMONS."—Mr. McKay is evidently no ordinary preacher. Although the distribution of his thoughts may not be the most logical, the thoughts themselves are thoroughly good and vigorously expressed.

THE INTER-RELATIONS OF PRAYER, PROVIDENCE, AND SCIENCE. By Rev. JAMES M'CANN, D.D. Glasgow: Porteous Brothers, 41, West Nile Street.

THIS pamphlet contains what may be regarded as the commencement and termination of the most recent controversy on the theory of the physical efficacy of prayer. This controversy virtually began with the article by Tyndall in the *Fortnightly Review* of Dec., 1865, when the author preached in reply two of these sermons, which were published at the time, but have long been out of print. The pamphlet concludes with the article by the same writer (Tyndall) in the *Contemporary Review* of October, 1872, in which he implicitly withdraws his opposition to the theory of prayer for physical benefit. Consequently, as he was undoubtedly the leader of this opposition, when he withdraws from the contest it may fairly be said to have closed. This pamphlet meets the religious necessity of the present hour. Scientists on all hands are denouncing prayer as a foolish superstition, and incompetent religionists are injuring the cause with their weak and silly attempts at reply. But here is a masterly answer to them all. The author shows himself thoroughly competent to grapple with the Tyndalls of the age.



The Prayer for Wisdom.

OUTLINE OF A SERMON DELIVERED AT THE OPENING OF
THE PRESENT ACADEMICAL SESSION IN UTRECHT, BY
PROFESSOR J. J. VON OOSTERZEE, D.D.

“Give me now wisdom.”—2 Chron. i. 10.

THE pious prayer of the youthful Solomon at the beginning of his kingly life! It will surely not be necessary to defend at any length the credibility of this account against the objections which are raised with regard to it in our time. Certainly he who allows his historic examination to be wholly dominated by his so-called philosophic principle, and has already tacitly decided that nothing can be credible which requires us to suppose a particular revelation or an actual miracle, will also find in this account sufficient occasion for writing the name of “cunningly devised fable” above the open page of the old Chronicles. But he who does so, and remains self-consistent, may quietly relegate the greater half of the sacred history into the convenient domain of fable and legend; with this necessary consequence, that the other half becomes for him unintelligible or unmeaning. He, on the other hand, who believes with us in a

personal living God, who is free to act as He will, the God of Saving Revelation and Miracle—a God who not only *is made manifest* to the reflecting reason in the ordinary course of events, but who also can *manifest Himself* in an extraordinary way, and actually *has revealed* Himself, above all in the Son of His love—such an one here also hears the footsteps of his God and Lord in their movement through the sanctuary of history, and uncovers his head at the voice, “The place whereon thou standest is holy ground.”

There is in this narrative, unless everything deceives us, a blending of the natural and supernatural, which surpasses all power of fabrication; in itself the high degree of fitness which marks the Divine manifestation here recorded, combined with its striking simplicity, reveals to us the personal intervention of Him “who dwelleth on high, who humbleth Himself to behold the things that are in heaven and in the earth.” That the highly-lauded wisdom of Solomon had not originally the religious character which is ascribed to it in the text, is indeed easily asserted, but is far from proved; and is moreover at variance with a multitude of facts. It may even with reason be doubted whether a wisdom and knowledge such as this king of Israel must have possessed in his day, can be explained upon purely natural grounds; assuredly it is somewhat simpler to find, with the sacred writer, in Solomon’s own experience the ground of his utterance, “The Lord giveth wisdom, out of his mouth cometh knowledge and understanding.” Enough already, where we are speaking as to wise men, to give on this point also a reason for our most holy faith, and to rebut the accusation of resting our edifice on a basis of sand. Under the heading of our text we shall be found to speak a word in season in presenting to you the prayer of the youthful king as one in the highest degree worthy of our

attention and imitation, during this hour, and in the present day also. Follow us with interest while we seek to speak to your edification, as in the presence of God. And Thou, God of Solomon, Father in Christ, manifest Thyself before the eye of our spirit in the tempered brightness of Thy majesty, and speak in our ear with the gentle voice of Thy love. Lord, teach us Thy way, and we shall walk in Thy truth; unite our hearts to fear Thy name! Amen.

I. "Come and see," first, *a youth who at a critical moment is found in prayer.* It is true every moment of this fleeting life has its own significance; but yet there are single hours which more than others cast a heavy weight into the trembling scale; and do you not consider the moment in which the text places us to be one of these? What a difference between that which Solomon has hitherto been, and that which he is henceforth to be; and how much depends, even for himself, upon the spirit in which the first step on the new path is taken! Until now child, boy, youth; nursed indeed in the bosom of luxury, but with a David as father, a Nathan as guide; beloved and happy among his brethren, but yet to a great extent on an equality with them. Now suddenly king, and—free; free from every bond, which if it had not fettered him, has at least curbed him; a youthful heart in his bosom, and already a crown on his brow: who does not long to see what is the first use he will make of his great but perilous prerogative? In a simple trait a whole difference of character and principle is sometimes made manifest. Thus it is in the conduct of Solomon at this hour, as compared with that of his brother Adonijah but a few short months ago. While the latter, even during David's lifetime, grasps at the throne, he prepares only a banquet: as though he would at once be able as from the table to ascend the princely

throne.* When Solomon, on the other hand, after David's death assumes the reins, there is prepared almost as the first act a religious festival of homage and coronation. With this end in view he addresses the elders of Israel (ver. 2), and summons them to a holy convocation on the height of Gibeon, some five miles from Jerusalem. In that place was still standing the tabernacle of witness, although the ark of the covenant had years before been brought by David to Zion. There—in consequence of this division of the sanctuary—were sacrifices frequently offered, as upon other sacred heights of the land. Thither accordingly the anointed of the Lord ascends, surrounded by his magnates; there he tarries and offers sacrifices; and with what hallowed emotion this day fills his heart, will be felt by every one who perceives yet in his prayer by night, the after vibrating of the finest chords of his heart which had been touched by day! Not so attractive for him is the cedar palace in Jerusalem, as this simple hill without, where the name of the God of his father is called upon. It is too little for him that his exaltation bears the stamp of human approval; he must consult the Lord in the palace of His holiness, and place himself with all his future under the gracious hand of the Holy One of Israel. Heart-gladdening sight—a king who feels himself God's subject; a youth who feels that his path cannot be pure, unless he directs it according to Jehovah's word; a rejoicing one, to whose joy, however, something is yet wanting so long as it is not tasted in the gracious presence of God.† Is it not the case that sincere piety, however often derided and disowned, is yet something glorious and fair; the ornament of every condition, and most of all of the highest; nobility of the nobility, and crown-jewel of royalty; but especially amiable and august in the young man who with whole and joyful heart has

* 1 Kings i. 8.

† 1 Kings iii. 3.

seen the service of God? It is true, when an aged man bows his head in penitence before God, Satan loses his prey; but when in a youthful heart a voice is awakened which cries for the living God, then angels give thanks to God around the throne for their new-born brother on earth. Oh, they know not what they say who assert that early piety has about it something unnatural and narrow-minded; as though Solomon there on Zion's height had sat in sackcloth and ashes, and had not rather enjoyed a life such as a crafty Adonijah could form no conception of! "A day in Thy courts is better than a thousand," was echoed forth deep in his soul; and again, "Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain in that build it." My friends, before we proceed further, may we not here discover the key to the mystery of so many a joyless present and so many a cheerless future? How many a youth is at this hour brought to a decisive turning-point in his life, but who begins his career altogether differently, and who therefore very soon makes a progress entirely unlike that of Solomon! How many a bark, lightly laden and fairly equipped, leaves the safe haven and dances over the rippling waves, and remains for awhile to distance others; but anon with the turn of fortune falls quickly behind, and entirely loses her course, until, become a plaything of the storm, she is dashed on yonder rocks and disappears in the gloomy abyss! What wonder, the inexperienced steersman had no sight of everything except the indispensable compass; and taken counsel with every one except that One who alone, "Mine is the counsel and the strength;" had counted beforehand on the haven, but not upon the storm and Him who alone can quell the storm. Alas! with all the power that is sad, the saddest thing of all in the present day is that the spirit of prayer, which hovered over the youth of the youthful Solomon, has in many a young

soul died out, and that many and many a careless head, in a surrounding which sports with all things alike, knows no longer a Gibeon's height above that dead level to which it comes with humility to bow before God. There is now a fable going its round in the world: unbelief has invented it, and scepticism now whispers it from the mouth of one schoolboy into the ears of others. It is this—that for the whole doctrine of childlike prayer there is no longer any place within the compass of the modern view of the world. If it is probable—and it is far from certain—that there is a living God, His will is nothing else than the law of nature; to be moved by no tears or prayers. Prayer is at best but a gymnastic exercise for the mind and heart, in which these are wrought up and raised to the everlasting ideal, and this exercise may be necessary, refreshing, exhilarating; but there is, strictly speaking, nothing more than what one thus inwardly confers upon himself. You may bow the head before the storm, or lift it in the kindly sunlight; but do not suppose that God bends down to you; that which you suppose to be the answer to your prayer is nothing else than *the echo of your own voice*. Thus sounds the gospel of despair, hailed by many a child of this age as the highest wisdom; a gospel before which the angel of prayer within flees from the unhallowed sanctuary; while in his place the genius of passive subjection, with rigid gaze, takes his seat by the grave of departed hope. Poor man, poor youth especially, who have all that is needful for outward life, but have lost prayer! How much better that you had understood Solomon's words, "In all thy ways acknowledge Him."

(To be continued.)

Homiletic Sketches on the Book of Psalms.

Our Purpose.—Many learned and devout men have gone *philologically* through this **TEHILLIM**, this book of Hebrew hymns, and have left us the rich results of their inquiries in volumes within the reach of every Biblical student. To do the mere verbal *hermeneutics* of this book, even as well as it has been done, would be to contribute nothing fresh in the way of evoking or enforcing its Divine ideas. A thorough **HOMILETIC** treatment it has never yet received, and to this work we here commit ourselves, determining to employ the best results of modern Biblical scholarship.

Our Method.—Our plan of treatment will comprise four sections:—(1.) The **HISTORY** of the passage. Lyric poetry, which the book is, is a delineation of living character; and the key, therefore, to unlock the meaning and reach the spirit of the words is a knowledge of the men and circumstances that the poet sketches with his lyric pencil.—(2.) **ANNOTATIONS** of the passage. This will include short explanatory notes on any ambiguous word, phrase, or allusion that may occur.—(3.) The **ARGUMENT** of the passage. A knowledge of the main drift of an author is amongst the most essential conditions for interpreting his meaning.—(4.) The **HOMILETICS** of the passage. This is our main work. We shall endeavour so to group the Divine ideas that have been legitimately deduced, as to suggest such thoughts, and indicate such sermonising methods, as may promote the proficiency of modern pulpit ministrations.

Subject.—Fretful Envy. (2) Genuine Piety its Antidote.

“Trust in the Lord, and do good:

So shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed.

Delight thyself also in the Lord;

And he shall give thee the desires of thine heart.

Commit thy way unto the Lord;

Trust also in him, and he shall bring it to pass:

And he shall bring forth thy righteousness as the light,

And thy judgment as the noonday.

Rest in the Lord,

And wait patiently for him:

Fret not thyself because of him who prospereth in his way,

Because of the man who bringeth wicked devices to pass.”

—Psalm xxxvii. 3—7.

HISTORY.—(See page 266.)

ANNOTATIONS. *Ver. 3.*—“*Trust in the Lord, and do good.*” This means, let your confidence have the effect of practical benevolence, let

your piety work philanthropically. "*So shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed.*" "Inhabit the land and feed in truth." The words, whether taken as a promise or a precept, mean a settled inheritance, and a moral progress in truth.

Ver. 4.—"Delight thyself also in the Lord." Instead of so highly appreciating the worldly prosperity of the wicked as to envy them, regard Jehovah as the supreme good, and delight thyself in Him. "*And he shall give thee the desires of thine heart.*" He will so respond to all the cravings of thy heart as to fill thee with a blessed satisfaction.

Ver. 5.—"Commit thy way unto the Lord." Roll upon Jehovah thy way. Roll thy way like one who lays upon the shoulder of one stronger than himself a burden which he is unable to bear (Psalm xxii. 8; 1 Peter v. 7).—Hengstenberg. "*Trust also in him, and he shall bring it to pass.*" Bring what to pass? All that is essential to satisfy thee concerning the providence of God in relation to the prosperity of the wicked, as well as all that will realise in thine experience the promises of heaven to thee and the holy longings of thine heart.

Ver. 6.—"And he shall bring forth thy righteousness as the light, and thy judgment as the noonday." Though thy character may be under the dark cloud of slander, thy righteousness shall one day be vindicated, thou shalt shine as the sun and the stars for ever and ever.

Ver. 7.—"Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for him." Be silent unto the Lord, and wait patiently for Him. Let no murmurings escape thy lips. Cordially acquiesce in the divine arrangements, and "wait patiently for him." "*Fret not thyself because of him,*" &c. This is merely the repetition of the first verse, and the burden of the whole Psalm.

HOMILETICS. Having noticed the nature of envy suggested in the foregoing verses, we proceed now to remark on the antidote which is given in this passage. And that antidote is *genuine piety*. These verses lead us to notice two things in relation to genuine piety.

I. Its **DEVELOPMENT**. Here it is represented as operating in four ways.

First: In a *practical trust* in the Lord. "Trust in the Lord, and do good." Trust in the Lord includes more than the strongest faith in His existence, excellence, government, and claims; it means an unbounded and unshaken confidence in His absolute perfection and in His relative love, faith-

ness, and superintendence. It is not a passive but an active state of mind, essentially active "it does good." Trust in the Lord, and do good." True philanthropy is ety in daily life.

It is represented as operating—

Secondly: In a *personal delight* in the Lord. "Delight yself also in the Lord." All men delight in some objects—ne in themselves, some in their kindred, some in their sessions, some in their influence, and some in their talents and attainments. But piety leads the soul to rejoice in the premely good. To delight in the Lord is something more in to delight in our theology or our church—ininitely re. In God alone is the happiness of moral mind. It is resented as operating—

Thirdly: In a *settled reliance* upon the Lord. "Commit thy y unto the Lord." What is man's way? His life, with all interests, needs, and possibilities. It means his destiny, that concerns him in all worlds for ever. A tremendous rden this, too weighty for any creature to sustain. Piety a rolling of this burden on the Lord. And this is a hteous, a necessary, and a blessed work. It is reprinted as operating—

Fourthly: In a *patient waiting upon* the Lord. "Rest in , Lord, and wait patiently for him." Be silent and deatly active. In the most painful and perplexing providences, t only be still and know that He is God, but steadily rsue the path of duty and wait patiently for Him.

Such is the *development* of genuine piety as indicated in see verses. What a noble and ennobling state of soul! ho can possess it without knowing it and making others acious of the fact? So strikingly and sublimely does it const with all other moral states of soul, that it is impossible mistake it. Would it were universal! Nothing is required to transform this world into a paradise but its enunce into each member of its teeming population. The her thing which these verses lead us to notice in genuine ety is—

II. Its BLESSEDNESS. What follows in man's condition and experience the benign workings of this piety? Several blessings are here suggested.

First: *Settledness*. "So shalt thou dwell in the land." Thou shalt have a permanent inheritance, all wanderings in wilderness, all restless roving of hearts, will give way to a settling down in comfort and rest. Piety makes a man feel at home in the world wherever he is, everywhere he feels that he is in his father's house, and though *legally* he cannot claim a foot of land, *morally* he inherits all.

Secondly: *Sustenance*. "Verily thou shalt be fed,"—fed not merely by bodily provisions, but by the higher provisions of soul—fed on *truth*. Truth, divine truth, is the soul's true aliment. It is that alone which answers the two great purposes of food, satisfaction and invigoration. Nothing but truth can satisfy the cravings of the soul; nothing but truth can invigorate its powers. Man's spiritual nature grows in the atmosphere of genuine piety, but in all other climates it sickens and decays.

Thirdly: *Realisation*. "He shall give thee the desires of thine heart," and "he shall bring it to pass." What do these expressions mean but this: Thou shalt realise both the cravings of thine heart and the objects of thine hope, the ideals thou art struggling after shall become grand realities in thy life?

Fourthly: *Vindication*. "He shall bring forth thy righteousness as the light, and thy judgment as the noonday." Whilst good men are unknown to most, and misunderstood by many, they are misrepresented by not a few. Their names are overshadowed with slander and calumny. But one day they shall be revealed to all, they shall break and blaze as orbs on the vision of mankind.

CONCLUSION: Such, then, is the development and blessedness of that genuine piety which is here presented as the *antidote* against that fretful envy at the prosperity of the wicked man. And what an antidote! Absolutely infallible! He who has this has no room for envy. Envy could no

more live or grow in such a heart than seeds could germinate in fire.

"A soul in commerce with her God is heaven ;
Feels not the tumults and the shocks of life ;
The whirls of passions and the strokes of heart."—*Young.*

Homiletic Sketches on the Book of Job.

The Book of Job is one of the grandest sections of Divine Scripture. It has never yet, to our knowledge, been treated in a purely Homiletic method for Homiletic ends. Besides many learned expositions on the book found in our general commentaries, we have special exegetical volumes of good scholarly and critical worth ; such as *Dra. Barnes*, *Wemyss*, *Mason Goode*, *Noyes Lee*, *Delitzsch*, and *Herman Hedwick Bernard* : the last is in every way a masterly production. For us, therefore, to go into philology and verbal criticism, when such admirable works are available to all students, would be superfluous, if not presumption. Ambiguous terms, when they occur, we shall of course explain, and occasionally suggest an improved rendering : but our work will be chiefly, if not entirely, Homiletic. We shall essay to bring out from the grand old words those Divine verities which are true and vital to man as man in all lands and ages. These truths we shall frame in an order as philosophic and suggestive as our best powers will enable us to do ; and this in order to help the earnest preachers of God's Holy Word.

Subject.—Zophar's First Speech to Job. (2) The Greatness of God and the Worthlessness of Man.

"Canst thou by searching find out God ?
Canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection ?
It is as high as heaven ; what canst thou do ?
Deeper than hell ; what canst thou know ?
The measure thereof is longer than the earth,
And broader than the sea.
If he cut off, and shut up, or gather together,
Then who can hinder him ?
For he knoweth vain men :
He seeth wickedness also ;
Will he not then consider it ?
For vain man would be wise,
Though man be born like a wild ass's colt."—*Job xi. 7—12.*

EXEGETICAL REMARKS.—*Ver. 7, 8, 9.*—"Canst thou by searching find out God? It is as high as heaven; what canst thou do? Deeper than hell; what canst thou know? The measure thereof is longer than the earth, and broader than the sea." Wilt thou attain unto the searching of God? Wouldst thou compare thy powers of scrutiny to those of God? Wilt thou attain even the perfection of the Almighty? Dost thou presume to imagine thou canst know everything as fully and as perfectly as He doth? (*ver. 8*). To aim at this perfection of His is the heights of heaven, how canst thou effect it? Deeper than the pit How canst thou know it? (*ver. 9*). The measure thereof is longer than the earth, and wider than the sea. How then canst thou presume to declare thyself free from all sin when it requireth such perfection as there described to be able to determine this point?

Vers. 10, 11.—"If he cut off, and shut up, or gather together, then who can hinder him? For he knoweth vain men: he seeth wickedness also; will he not then consider it?" The translation of BARNES makes clear, I think, the meaning of the speaker: "If He arrest, and imprison, and bring to trial, who can prevent Him? for He knoweth men of falsehood, and He seeth iniquity, though He does not seem to notice it." The rendering of ELZAS is identical with this.

Ver. 12.—"For vain man would be wise, though man be born like a wild ass's colt." "Let then the hollow-hearted be wise, and the colt and wild ass become a man."—ELZAS. For hence even a worthless man will get him understanding; yea, a man even that were born like a wild ass's colt. It has been well said that there are no end of translations to this verse, and conjectures as to its meaning. Some have founded upon it the doctrine of what is called original depravity, but even if the language taught that, it is the language of a man who is not inspired, and who is under the influence of serious errors. I am inclined to the meaning made clear in the translation of ELZAS, namely, that it is an exhortation to the hollow-hearted to become wise, and to the man who is as untractable and wild as the Arabian ass to become docile, gentle, and humane.

HOMILETICS. In the preceding portion of Zophar's speech we discovered questionable reproof and necessary teaching. Zophar brought charges against Job which, if true, deserved reproof—they were the charges of garrulousness, falsehood, irreverence, and hypocrisy; but these charges were to a great extent, if not entirely, false and ungrounded. But even had they been true, the spirit and style of Zophar's reproof could

not **be** justified: the reproof seems heartless, coarse, and insolent. But whilst in his words we found a questionable reproof, we discover also a kind of teaching which is necessary to **all** mankind—a teaching that involved intercourse with the mind of God, instruction in the wisdom of God, and faith in the forbearing love of God.

In the portion of his speech now under our attention he refers to the *greatness of God* and the *worthlessness of man*. Here we have—

I. THE GREATNESS OF GOD. “Canst thou by searching find out God?” &c. His words imply—

First: That God *transcends all thoughts*. He cannot be found out. There is no harm in *searching*—the searching is (1) a *righteous* occupation. It agrees with the profoundest instincts of the soul—it is stimulated by the manifestations of nature, it is encouraged by the declarations of the Bible, it is aided by the revelations of Christ. (2) It is a *useful* occupation. There is no occupation so quickening, humbling, and ennobling to the soul. (3) It is an *endless* occupation.

All holy intelligences will be pursuing this work for ever. The endlessness of the pursuit agrees with the inexhaustible powers of our nature and the strong instinct of mystery within us. Yes, the occupation is endless; He will never be found out, the finite can never comprehend the Infinite.* How high is heaven? How deep is hell? Who knows? Yet were the intellect to tower to the highest heights of the one, or penetrate the deepest abyss of the other, it would be as far from comprehending the Infinite as ever. “It is as high as heaven; what canst thou do?”

Secondly: He *defies all resistance*. “If he cut off, or shut up, or gather together, then who can hinder him?” (1) All attempts to oppose Him in *argument* are futile. Corrupt men in all ages have and still do set up their own judgments against the revelations of heaven. They try to clear themselves of the charges that His justice has brought against them, to reason away the revelation that His goodness has made to them.

* See “Homilist,” Editor’s Series, vol. ii., page 110.

But how utterly vain! Human reason opposing God is *but* a rushlight endeavouring to show the darkness of that *sun* in whose floods of light its own little radiance is lost. "Who art thou, oh man, that repliest against God?" (2) *All* attempts to oppose Him in *conduct* are futile. It is characteristic of unrenewed men the world over, and the ages through, that they set themselves against the Almighty. They pursue a course of conduct in direct antagonism to His will; the language of their life is, "Who is the Lord, that we should obey him?" But how utterly futile their antagonism! He moves on in His majestic career against all creature oppositions. All the hells of the universe are incapable of retarding His progress for a moment. "He doeth according to His will in the army of heaven, and amongst the inhabitants of the earth." "Who can hinder him?" Can a pebble on the beach hinder the mighty ocean in its advancing flow? No more can any combination of creatures hinder Him in the development of His purposes.

Thirdly: He *knows all men*. "For he knoweth vain men: he seeth wickedness also." Some imagine that He is too great to take notice of such a creature as man—that the supposition is derogatory to His glory. Not at all. What has not been beneath Him to create is not beneath Him to notice. To Him great and small are alike, and His Omniscience is as cognisant of an atom as a globe, of an insect as a seraph.

"He sees with equal eye as God of all
The hero perish or a sparrow fall."

He knoweth vain men, He knows each one thoroughly, He knows all that he *has been*, all that he *is*, all that he *will ever be*. "He seeth wickedness also." Where some see virtue, and others see innocence, He sees wickedness. "He understands the thoughts of men afar off." Whoever may be ignorant of us, God is not.

So far these verses indicate the greatness of God. Zophar represents the Almighty as transcending all thought, defying all resistance, and knowing all men. Here we have—

. **THE WORTHLESSNESS OF MAN.** "For vain man would
ise," &c. However varied the different interpretations
is verse may be, most of them imply the vanity and un-
ableness of man. Observe—

rest: *Man's vanity.* "Vain man." What is vanity?
tiness. Such, indeed, is the marginal reading. Morally,
generate men are hollow-hearted; they lack reality;
thoughts are not in accord with the real, their hearts
not centred on the real, their lives are not in conformity
the real. They are living lies; "they walk in a vain
." "Every man," says David, "at his best estate, is alto-
er vanity." The transitoriness of his life, the unsatis-
riness of his enjoyments, the undivinity of his character,
salient features and mighty proofs of his vanity.

condly: *Man's untractableness.* "Like a wild ass's colt."
wild ass of the East is not only a creature more fleet,
fiery than our horses, but most fractious and restless.
perverse is man; even in the first dawnings of his moral
he does what he is commanded not to do, and leaves
ne those things which he is commanded to do. "The
ed are estranged from the womb; they go astray as soon
ey be born, speaking lies."

CONCLUSION. Let us learn to appreciate true and noble
ghts from whatever source they come, whether from
ired or uninspired men, from men of the distant past
the living future. Zophar was not of the chosen people,
was he a man inspired with infallibility, or naturally of
ed and noble temper; yet here he utters truths deserv-
well the attention of all men. Rays of light stream from
hen as well as Christian lands, the *logos* lighteth every
that cometh into the world. Nor let us over-estimate
mental superiority of this age to those that have gone
re. How many, out of the millions of modern England,
loftier conceptions of God, or truer judgments concern-
humanity at large, than this old Arabian? The civilisa-
we boast of is, morally considered, a civilisation of little
h. We crave for something higher.

"Bring us the higher example ; release us
 Into the larger coming time :
 And into Christ's broad garment piece us
 Rags of virtue as poor as crime,
 National selfishness, civic vaunting.
 No more Jew or Greek then taunting
 Nor taunted ; no more England nor France !
 But one confederate brotherhood, planting
 One flag only to mark the advance,
 Onward and upward, of all humanity.
 For fully developed Christianity
 Is civilisation perfected.
 ' Measure the frontier,' shall be said,
 ' Count the ships,' in national vanity ?
 —Count the nation's heart-beats sooner."

ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING.

Sermonic Glances at the Gospel of St. John.

As our purpose in the treatment of this Gospel is purely the development, in the briefest and most suggestive form, of Sermonic outlines, we must refer our readers to the following works for all critical inquiries into the author and authorship of the book, and also for any minute criticisms on difficult clauses. The works we shall especially consult are :—"Introduction to New Testament," by Bleek ; "Commentary on John," by Tholuck ; "Commentary on John," by Hengstenberg ; "Introduction to the Study of the Gospels," by Westcott ; "The Gospel History," by Ebrard ; "Our Lord's Divinity," by Liddon ; "St. John's Gospel," by Coesterman ; "Doctrine of the Person of Christ," by Dornor ; Lange ; &c., &c.

Subject.—The Pool of Siloam ; or, the World in Miniature

"After this there was a feast of the Jews ; and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. Now there is at Jerusalem by the sheep-market a pool, which called in the Hebrew tongue Bethesda, having five porches. In these lay a great multitude of impotent folk, of blind, halt, withered, waiting for the moving of the water. For an angel went down at a certain season into the pool, and troubled the water : whosoever then first, after it

ing of the water stepped in was made whole of whatsoever disease he

And a certain man was there, which had an infirmity thirty and years. When Jesus saw him lie, and knew that he had been now a time in that case, he saith unto him, Wilt thou be made whole? The impotent man answered him, Sir, I have no man, when the water is led, to put me into the pool: but while I am coming, another step-
down before me. Jesus saith unto him, Rise, take up thy bed, and

And immediately the man was made whole, and took up his bed and walked: and on the same day was the sabbath."—John v.

NOTATION. Ver. 1.—"*After this there was a feast of the Jews.*" Literally, "after these things," implying a succession of events. "Here comes," says Lange, "the first great ministry of Jesus in Galilee." The feast here is a subject on which expositors are not agreed. The probability, however, is that it was the Passover, the second of the fourth year in our Lord's ministry. The point is of no practical moment. *And Jesus went up to Jerusalem.*" He went up from Capernaum, where he called Matthew. (Mark ii. 13, 14.) Jerusalem occupied an elevated position, not only in a moral, but in a local sense; it was 2000 feet above the sea on the boundaries of Judea.

Ver. 2.—"*Now there is at Jerusalem by the sheep-market (sheep-gate) a pool, which is called in the Hebrew tongue Bethesda, having five porches.*" John wrote A.D. 96, he wrote after Jerusalem had been destroyed; there stood the pool. This pool is generally regarded as that enclosed enclosure near St. Stephen's Gate, and is some 360 feet long, 130 feet broad, and 70 feet deep. It is called Bethesda, meaning a house of mercy. "Five porches"—these, it would seem, were covered recesses around the pool for the shelter of the sick.

Ver. 3.—"*In these lay a great multitude of impotent folk, of blind, halt, withered.*" "Impotent"—the enfeebled and emaciated. "Blind"—blindness in the East is far more general than here. In Cairo it is that one of every five is either blind or has diseased eyes. Some of our greatest men we have ever had have been blind—Homer, Ossian, Milton, the world's illustrious poets, were blind. John Metcalf, the great engineer, who lived in 1788, was blind. One of our greatest modern men is blind. "Halt"—the crippled and lame. "Withered"—withered. "*Waiting for the moving of the water.*" Though this verse and the next verse are not found in the great majority of the best manuscripts, and are rejected by many modern critics, there is strong internal evidence in favour of its genuineness. It seems almost necessary to give meaning to the seventh verse. For varied opinions, see *in loc.* The statement of Ebrard, that much is gained by ex-

cluding the verse from the text, he does not satisfactorily sustain. See "Gospel History," p. 294.

Ver. 4.—"*For an angel went down.*" It is not said that an angel was seen doing this. There is nothing absurd in this. It is spirit that governs matter, and gives to matter its virtues.

Ver. 5.—"*And a certain man was there, which had an infirmity thirty and eight years.*" This fact is stated, probably, to show the extremity of the case, and to exhibit the power and merey of Christ.

Ver. 6.—"*When Jesus saw him lie, and knew that he had been now a long time in that case, he saith unto him, Wilt thou be made whole !*" This man, perhaps, had never seen Christ before, and yet He knows all about him, and puts to him the question, "Wilt thou be made whole !" Christ never acts contrary to the volition of men.

Ver. 7.—"*The impotent man answered him, Sir, I have no man, when the water is troubled, to put me into the pool : but while I am coming, another steppeth down before me.*" He was utterly friendless as well as diseased and powerless, and those around him were all heartless and selfish. They cared not for him so long as they could push their way into the healing pool.

Ver. 8.—"*Jesus saith unto him, Rise, take up thy bed, and walk.*" He had no need to help him into the water, He could effect the cure by His mere volition, without any instrumentality whatever.

HOMILETICS. The remarkable incident here recorded may be legitimately and profitably used as an illustration of the great world of mankind. Indeed, in it you have a world in miniature. Looking at it in this light we observe :—

I. That the human world is GREATLY AFFLICTED. In this pool we have a great multitude of impotent folk lying halt, withered, &c. What was seen at Bethesda may be seen everywhere throughout the vast population of the earth. Men are everywhere in suffering—witness battle-fields, slavery, hospitals, prisons, &c., &c. Suffering is the background of the great picture of human life. The world's music is in the minor key. There is a wail in all its undertones ; its history is tragic in the extreme. Two things should ever be remembered in relation to human suffering.

First: It is the *effect of sin*. All human pains have their root in wrong. The connection between sin and suffering is a benevolent arrangement. To quench hell as long as sin reigns would be an injury to the creation.

Secondly: It is *sometimes the means of holiness*. They act in some cases as the physician's curative cup and the Father's chastening rod.

Looking at the incident as a picture of mankind, we observe:—

II. That the human world HAS ITS ALLEVIATING ELEMENTS. These suffering multitudes were at Bethesda—the house of mercy. Perhaps the waters in this pool had, like many waters, medicinal virtues, or perhaps healing power was given to them by the descending angel. In either case we have the fact in connection with alleviating elements. The world is indeed a Bethesda; there are healing waters flowing at the feet of every sufferer. What are they?

First: The *medicinal properties of the earth*. Science has discovered in the mineral, the vegetable, and animal kingdoms, elements to mitigate and remove for a time the diseases and pains of suffering men.

Secondly: The *soothing influences of nature*. There is much in the bright sky, the green fields, the wooded hills, the yellow shore, and the blue wave, the beauty of the garden, the grandeur of the forest, the music of the river, and the chorus of the groves, to allay the anguish of our suffering nature.

Thirdly: The *ministry of social love*. Corrupt as the world is, the fountain of its affections is not dried up, its healing streams circulate through all circles; kind words, loving looks, and tender hands of sympathy are alleviating forces ever at work.

Fourthly: The *blessed Gospel of Christ*. This, indeed, is the great panacea, this is the sovereign balm for every wound. Such are some of the alleviating elements of life, some of the healing waters that ripple at our feet.

Looking at it in this light, we observe:—

III. That the human world is **PRE-EMINENTLY SELFISH**. At the side of this pool there was one man who had had an infirmity for thirty-eight years, and amongst the crowd who had settled there year after year he had found no one to help him: "While I am coming, another steppeth down." One might have thought that if they were too selfish to help him before they were cured themselves, that on their return from the healing waters they would have done so. But no, each cared for himself. Sad picture this of the human world! Every man for himself! Selfishness is not only a regard for our own interest, but a disregard for the interest of others. Selfishness is *injustice*. He who is taken up entirely with himself keeps back powers which could be employed in the service of others. Selfishness is *impiety*. The selfish man makes self his God: he is at once the centre and circumference of his own activity. Selfishness is *misery*. All the fiendish passions which are the furies of hell spring from it.

Looking at it in this light, we observe:—

IV. That the human world has a **GLORIOUS DELIVERER**. There was one Who appeared now amongst the sufferers, Who said to the impotent man, "Arise, take up thy bed, and walk." Three remarks are suggested concerning this Deliverer:—

First: He cures *the greatest of all human sufferers*. This was a man afflicted for no less than thirty-eight years—a whole generation had come and gone during the period of his affliction. "Christ is able to save to the uttermost."

Secondly: He cures by *virtue of His own word*. "Take up thy bed," &c. These omnific words carried with them the curative virtue. Without the intervention of any means the man became hale and strong at once. He took up the little pallet on which his suffering body had been wont to lay, and walked forth in manly vigour.

Thirdly: He cures in concurrence *with the will of the patient*. "Wilt thou?" Christ does not outrage our freedom. He asks us if we will be saved. He says to each, Wilt thou have thy guilt, thy ignorance, thy misery removed? If thou con-

sentest, the work is done ; if not, thou art left to suffer and to die.

Blessed be God, this glorious Deliverer is still in our suffering world. To each He says, Wilt thou be whole ? *

Gems of Thought.

WEEK-NIGHT SKETCHES ON THE FIRST BOOK OF SAMUEL.

No. XI.

Subject.—Public Opinion in reference to the New King.

“And Saul also went home to Gibeah ; and there went with him a band of men, whose hearts God had touched. But the children of Belial said, How shall this man save us ! And they despised him, and brought him no presents. But he held his peace.”—Chap. x. 26, 27.

SAUL is now fairly installed as king of the nation. And he has the authority of the prophet for assuming that the position is assigned to him by God. Many of the people, however, do not thus regard his elevation, but view it more in the light of a usurpation. True, they knew that it had been occasioned by Samuel, but the selection did not harmonise with their wishes, and therefore they were glad to find any plea against it. Probably nothing short of their own coronation would have silenced the opposition of these narrow spirits. However, Saul is not left entirely at their mercy, but is encouraged by the sympathy of many men who have hope in his ability to meet the unknown future of the nation. “There went with him a band of men, whose hearts God had touched.”

Contemplate—

* For farther illustration of these points, see Volume II., Third Series, p. 144.

I. THE SYMPATHY OF SAUL'S FRIENDS. There are times in the life of man when the sympathy of a friend is of priceless value. At critical junctures of our history, in times of sorrow or in seasons of joy, it is most acceptable. Who has not felt the kind word of a companion to be the most sheltered haven from the storm raging upon the open sea of life?

1. *This sympathy was human.* "There went with him a band of men." Divine sympathy is always helpful when we are engaged upon the great enterprises of life. But holy and happy as it may be to bend our spirits into prayer, and to touch our natures into song, yet, under the present conditions of our lives, human sympathy is more tangible and natural. In fact, it then becomes the embodiment of the divine, which is manifested to us in the help of living men around us. Potent as are spiritual influences to sustain us in duty, is it not nice to feel the pressure of the hand, to hear the love which speaks in the quivering voice, and to see the eye of compassion looking upon us?

2. *This sympathy was collective.* "A band of men." The sympathy of one man would have done but little for Saul at this time. There are times when we cannot bear the company of more than one friend; the advent of a second would be deemed an intrusion on our grief. But the times in which Saul now moves are perplexing, and the combinations against which he has to contend are strong, and therefore the advice and support of the multitude are more welcome to him.

3. *This sympathy was practical.* "There went with him." These friends of Saul did not just come up to him to shake hands and to congratulate him upon his social advancement, and then retire to their homes, leaving him to the peril of his position; but they went with him, to cheer, comfort, and protect. We want more of this kind of sympathy in the world to-day; a love that is ready to expose itself for the well-being of another.

4. *This sympathy was fervent.* "Whose hearts." They did not merely follow Saul as a body-guard of soldiers, who were to be paid for their work. No! these men went with him as

friends. There was some deep power within that bound them to the new king; and therefore we cannot wonder at their sympathy taking a practical form.

5. *This sympathy was divinely called forth.* "Whose hearts God had touched." Yes! all hearts are in the Divine hand, and when we are placed by Providence in circumstances of trial, it can influence the most potent so that they become our friends.

Contemplate—

II. THE ANTIPATHY OF SAUL'S ENEMIES. "But the children of Belial said, How shall this man save us? And they despised him, and brought him no presents."

1. *This antipathy was envious.* "This man save us." They thought themselves far more worthy for the position of king than Saul; they considered his social rank beneath theirs, and his valour far inferior to their chivalry. Envy always makes men blind. These children of Belial could not therefore see those powers of mind and body which qualified Saul for the place he had just been called to occupy.

2. *This antipathy was sarcastic.* "This man." As though they had said, "Are there not multitudes of men amongst us far superior to him, and yet he to be chosen! It is not only an insult to us personally, but also to the nation at large."

3. *This antipathy was presumptuous.* Had not God brought Saul to the throne? had not Samuel publicly anointed him? had not the nation signified their joy at his recognition? Who then are these children of Belial, that they should object to him? Why should they place themselves in opposition to such a potent and even holy authority?

4. *The antipathy was presumptuous because it was unconcealed.*

III. THE SUGGESTIVE CONDUCT OF SAUL IN REFERENCE TO THE HATRED OF HIS ENEMIES.

"But he held his peace."

1. *His conduct was dignified.*

2. *His conduct was discreet.*

3. *His conduct was magnanimous.*

Lessons :—

1. *The considerateness of Divine Providence in giving us the aid of our companions in the trying circumstances of life.*
2. *That the efforts of national opinion are often misdirected.*
3. *That envy is often the secret of much political opposition.*
4. *That silence is the best method of treating such contemptible opposition.*

Peterborough.

JOSEPH S. EXELL.

Subject.—Personal Responsibility.

“What is that to thee? follow thou me.”—John xxi. 22.

IT is good to know the principles of Christianity, it is better to practise them. One of our avowed principles is, that the conduct of others towards Jesus Christ ought not to govern our own; the agency of man cannot make that which is wrong right, nor that which is right wrong; the difference between right and wrong is essential and eternal.

Peter felt a deep interest in John, and was anxious to know what department he was to occupy in the new kingdom. I presume Peter meant no wrong in asking such a question, it was the natural dictate of a kind heart; Jesus, however, told him, What is the history of that to thee? Thy work is to echo the doctrine I have proclaimed, to tread in My footsteps.

“*If I will.*” This is a notable expression. Christ here intimates that the personal history of every individual is under His authority; we are not to do and to be what we like, but what Christ wills; He wills that Peter should die a martyr, and that John should survive all the other disciples, and it cannot be altered.

The doctrine of the text is this :—*That it is important to think more about Jesus Christ Himself, than about any fellow-agents in spreading His religion in the world.*

I. BECAUSE JESUS CHRIST HAS A PERSONAL AND ESSENTIAL PRE-EMINENCE. He is what others are not, what others cannot be, what others were not appointed to be. If we are anxious to come in contact with the most agreeable truths, let us rise at once above the bustle and agitation of the Church in its state of imperfection, and fix our minds on the blessed Redeemer Himself. Moreover, He is the revealer of the Godhead to man; no man hath seen God, no man can see God and live, but Christ hath revealed Him, and I look at Him and see all that I need. Nor is this all, I see in Jesus what has a peculiar relation to me. I see in Him a loving, affectionate brother, a teacher, a priest, a king; there I see the very person on whom my all depends. My fellow-Christian may benefit, comfort, and strengthen me, but I can and must do without him; his being is not the foundation of my hopes and prospects, but when I look to the Son of God, I find that I cannot live without Him: turn away from man and study the biography of Jesus—"Behold the Lamb of God," &c.

II. BECAUSE OUR ENGAGEMENTS TO JESUS ARE INDEPENDENT OF OUR FELLOW-BEINGS. That is, anything they may do, or not do, cannot at all affect our individual obligation to the Lord Jesus. We perceive the truth of this if we consider that every one has his own work. The church has its work to do, and it cannot be done by the schools of philosophy; and then each member of the church has his work to do, and if he neglects it he will be rebuked in the presence of the universe. But you say, my ability is very small, my sphere is so contracted. Never mind, God has called you to that: be faithful in the least, and He will make you ruler over many things. Does the scholar say, Because such a man is indolent, I may be so too? Does the man of business say, Because others neglect to provide for their families, I may do so too? No, they act on juster principles, and say, Their neglect cannot absolve me, and their activity cannot release me. "Each one must give an account to God." Thank God, I can love many of my fellow-agents in the cause of God,

but I would not for the crown of England stand before the bar of God in the place of any one. I have my hopes through the blood of Christ, and so have you; but I will stand my own trial. "Each one must bear his own burden."

III. BECAUSE BY THINKING OF JESUS WE CAN MAINTAIN AN EMINENT STANDARD OF MORAL ACTION. There is a tendency in individuals, families, and churches to imitate one another. If these were perfect, the imitation might be useful, but as it is otherwise, it is likely to be injurious. The mind of man comes down from heaven to earth, from the Creator to the creature, from the Master to the servant, and the result of this is a kind of fatal uniformity pervades the church.

No man on earth was intended to be my standard, however there is *One* whom it is right to imitate. In my blessed Redeemer I see perfection. I need not be cautious lest I copy the faults while I copy the excellencies. I see immutability here also. I make one and another my model, they die, and I am left solitary and alone, but Jesus always remains the same. (1) *Imitate His cordiality in religion.* Whatever the Saviour engaged in it was done with all His heart. His prayer, miracles, sufferings, and last commission were all the emanations of His heart. (2) *Imitate His wonderful triumph over obstacles.* I suppose the Saviour never preached a sermon that was not opposed by some party or other, but He possessed that divine philosophy which enabled Him to endure and overcome. Would it not be useful for us to be thoroughly acquainted with the maxims which governed Christ's intercourse with His enemies as well as His friends? (3) *Imitate His devotion.*

"Cold mountains and the midnight air
Witnessed the fervour of His prayer."

He lived in deep communion with His Father. Never forget that He made the cross itself a place of prayer. He prayed for His disciples, He prayed for His bitterest foes, and these prayers brought down answers of peace to mankind. O brethren, pray for us: you can get no good from my ministry unless you pray.

CALEB MORRIS.

Subject.—The Nemesis of Wrong.

“And they said one to another, We are verily guilty concerning our brother . . . therefore is this distress come upon us.”—Gen. xlii. 21.

ALTHOUGH wrong is not fully punished in this life, the angel of retribution does track the footsteps of guilt, and inflict many a terrible stroke upon the wrong-doer.

This fact is strikingly illustrated in the narrative before us. Observe—

I. THE POSSESSION OF A GUILTY SECRET.*

Little did the guilty ten imagine the trouble that secret would cost them, when they so eagerly put themselves in possession of it. At first they rejoiced in their success, but they lived to find that success in hiding wrong is the bitterest defeat in the long run.

1. *This secret bound them henceforward to a life of hypocrisy.* Having told a lie they were compelled to live it out.

2. *This secret filled them with constant anxiety.* What if the secret should elude their grasp. There were ten of them to keep it. How they feared each other! Then, Joseph might return. Perhaps he was dead—they hoped so! Horrid secret!

3. *This secret neutralised all healthful moral influence.* A life of prayer and holiness was impossible. Conscience urged confession and reparation. Observe:—

II. THE BLACK CLOUD OF SUSPICION DARKENED THEIR DAILY LIFE.

1. *They were the OBJECTS of suspicion.* When under the sore pressure of famine the patriarch sent them to buy corn in Egypt, he refused to allow Benjamin in their company, “Lest peradventure some mischief might befall him.” And later he cried, bitterly and reproachfully, “Me have ye bereaved of my children.” They were suspected.

2. *They were the SUBJECTS of suspicion.* A sense of insecurity haunted them. They lived in dread of God and man. Before

* Vide Robertson's sermon on the Restoration of the Erring.

the governor they protest that they are true men, yet, aside, they whisper to each other, "We are verily guilty concerning our brother," &c. They feel the avenger is ever upon their path.

" Whence is that knocking ?
How is't with me when every noise appals me ? "

Observe—

III. THE EVER-DREADED, BUT INEVITABLE EXPOSURE OF THEIR GUILT.

Again they are driven into Egypt. At first Providence seems to favour them. They dine with the governor, but this only prepares the way for their exposure. "The cup was found in Benjamin's sack," and in utter despair they cried, "God hath found out the iniquity of thy servants." Then came the awful revelation, "I am Joseph, whom ye sold." They were dumb with horror. Bitter were their tears.

Still they have not exhausted the bitter cup. Twenty years before, they had gone home from Dothan with the lie which was to cause them so much misery; and now the Nemesis compels them to go home and expose their own villainy.

" Be sure your sin will find you out."

JOHN C. BURNETT.

THOUGHTS.—"Thoughts being either virtuous or otherwise, their influence must be either advantageous or pernicious. They are not mere visions that flit before the mind for a moment, and then pass away for ever, making no more impression upon the heart than the feathery clouds of a summer sky upon the granite hills. They are for the most part germs. The most light and unsubstantial of them are like those tiny seeds that float on their downy wings in the softest zephyr; they drop into a soil where they may germinate and grow. Or, to change the figure, the thoughts that rise in the soul are like the exhalations from the earth, they form clouds in the over-arching heavens; clouds that discharge themselves in fructifying showers, or devastating storms."

The Preacher's Scrap Room.

SHORT ESSAYS.

VANITY.

Vanity, as has been often observed, is generally the accompaniment of ignorance, to which, indeed, it stands in relation of both cause and effect ; cause, in that the conceited man, conscious of no mental sterility, takes no pains to sow in his mind the fair seeds of knowledge : effect, in that, never pursuing wisdom, she seems to such an one to have no existence outside the little world of fact which necessarily comes under his ken, and which he vainly imagines to be the entire universe of truth. Whereas, to a sincere disciple of learning, the horizon of truth, like that other horizon of which Goldsmith speaks,

“ Still, as he follows, flees,”

and, the more he has explored of her fair realms the less he seems to himself to have explored, by contrast with the yet unseen wonders of her illimitable beyond.

NAMING A CHILD.

We view things relatively, not positively, therefore I cannot think that a father is wise in resorting to the practice which a father so often resorts to, of naming a child after his favourite author. For a child may grow up to be a blessing, or a curse, and if it prove the latter, it must, to a certainty, by making the name which it bears one that cannot be thought of by the parent but with feelings of anguish, imperil the father's attachment to the author whom he has sought to honour in his offspring—an author too, perhaps, from whose writings the parent's afflicted mind might otherwise derive the greatest earthly consolation.

BESTOWING, THE CONDITION OF AUGMENTING.

It is a well-known paradox that, if we would increase the stock of mental and moral wealth which we may happen to possess, we must freely expend it for the benefit of others. The brightness of the intellect, and of the soul, like the brightness of material objects, is in proportion to the light which they each reflect.

THORNTON WELLS.

The Chief Founders of the Chief Faiths.

Around no men, amongst all the millions of mankind, does so much interest gather as around the Founders of the Chief Religious Faiths of the world. Such men are sometimes almost lost in the obscurity of remote ages, or of the mystery with which they surrounded themselves, or their early followers invested them. But whenever they can be discerned, their characters analysed, and their deeper experiences understood, they are found to be not only leaders and masters of the multitudes who have adopted more or less of their creed and ritual, but also interpreters (more or less partial) of the universal yearnings of the soul of man. Such men may have seemed to sit at the fountains of human thought and feeling, and to have directed or have coloured the mysterious streams, but they have quite as often indicated in their doctrines and in their deeds the strong courses of the thoughts and feeling which are more permanent and deeper than any one man or even any one age could completely discover. The aim of these papers will be, with necessary brevity, to review the chief of such men, noting suggestively rather than exhaustively, their *biography*, their *circumstances*, their *theology*, and their *ethics*. And in concluding the series it is purposed to compare and to contrast each and all of them with the "One Man whom in the long roll of ages we can love without disappointment, and worship without idolatry, the Man Christ Jesus."

PRINCIPAL BOOKS OF REFERENCE.—Max Müller's "History of Ancient Sanskrit Literature," "The Science of Language," "Chips from a German Workshop;" Rev. F. D. Maurice's "Religions of the World;" Archdeacon Hardwick's "Christ and other Masters;" Rev. J. W. Gardner's "Faiths of the World;" Miss Mary Carpenter's "Last Days of Rammohun Roy;" Rev. F. W. Farrar's "Witness of History to Christ;" Rev. A. W. Williamson's "Journey in North China;" Canon Liddon's Bampton Lecture on "Our Lord's Divinity;" Cousin's "History of Modern Philosophy;" J. K. Clarke's "Ten Greek Religions;" Father Huc's "Christianity in China."

No. II.

CONFUCIUS.

PROBABLY in the same century, if not in precisely the same years, in which Gautama Buddha was, in India, evolving, both in his thoughts and in his character, the system that has had an unparalleled influence on the religious life of the East, Confucius was, in China, giving rise to another of the Chief Faiths of the World. Whether our theory be that the age makes the man, or contrariwise, that great men mould and colour the life of the ages, it is nevertheless of signal importance that we should realise as far as possible the surroundings and influences into the midst of which every such hero was born, and in which he lived, and first touched the magic springs of far-reaching and long-enduring power. The age helps us to understand the man, and the man often interprets to us the

tendencies of the age. Hence in our glance at Confucius we notice the land, and age, and atmosphere in which he lived, calling them generally his

CIRCUMSTANCES.

Since China is the type in the world both of exclusiveness and of permanence, we have a very peculiar task in endeavouring to understand the national circumstances into which Confucius—or to use his Chinese name, Kung-fu-tsee—was born. The exclusiveness of the people makes thorough acquaintance with their history, even in this age of free intercourse amongst most nations, almost impossible; and the permanence, the fixity of their life, leads to a lack of stirring interest in their history, and to the want of events to mark off their eras. The great antiquity of China has so much to do with the spirit of Confucius, with the form of his work, and the whole genius of his system, that we shall do service by quoting some sentences from an able modern writer in description of that antiquity: "To say that it is older than any other *existing* nation is saying very little. Herodotus, who has been called the Father of History, travelled in Egypt about 450 B.C. He studied its monuments bearing the names of its kings, who were as distant from his time as he is from ours—monuments which even then belonged to a grey antiquity. But the kings who erected those monuments were possibly posterior to the founders of the Chinese empire. Porcelain vessels, with Chinese mottoes on them, have been found in those ancient tombs in shape, material, and appearance precisely like those which are made in China to-day; and Rosellini believes them to have been imported from China by kings contemporary with Moses, or before him. This nation and its institutions have outlasted everything. The ancient Bactrian and Assyrian kingdoms, the Persian monarchy, Greece and Rome, have all risen, flourished, and fallen—and China continues still the same. The dynasty has been occasionally changed; but the laws, customs, institutions, all that makes national life, have continued. The authentic history of China commences some two thousand years before Christ, and a thousand years in this history is like a century in that of any

other people. The oral language of China has continued the same that it is now for thirty centuries." From such a record as this we readily conceive that Confucius was surrounded by a wonderful civilisation, having amongst many of its arts and habits, historic narration and research. It was through his study of the annals of the kings, authentic records of some of whom extend back to 2357 B.C., that he actually became the Founder of the Faith that bears his name. For he contrasted the disorder and demoralisation of his age with the ideal pictures these records had given him of the primitive line of Chinese kings, and, as Professor Maurice says, "he was disgusted with the confusion and disorder which he found in all departments of the state, and he retired to meditate in secret the grounds upon which a reformation must be undertaken." The books that would come to him as the sacred books, being in some aspects what the Vedas were to the Hindu, were entitled "*king*," or, with peculiar emphasis, "the books." The virtues honoured in these writings were mainly those that tend to *orderliness*. For generations the best national life among them seems to have been a struggle to be orderly. The emperor is to be the source and spring of order. And all the government functionaries are to be chosen chiefly because of their fitness to preserve order. For this the schools are established, because of their aspirations after this the Chinese have from immemorial times been distinguished as literary and scholastic. The disorder and ruin into which Confucius mournfully felt the people had fallen was mainly decay in the schools that thus intimately and intensely affect the whole national life. "Because they had fallen into decay the whole fabric seemed fallen with them, hence it was necessary that a reformer should appear. Confucius appeared, not to introduce new maxims, but to revive the old." He sought to lead back his fellow-subjects from what he conceived to be their lapsed and chaotic condition to the ancient models. Coming into contact with such circumstances, and having studied such ideals, he sought to improve the former and to honour the latter, and to accomplish the one by achieving the other. Hence he correctly described himself as "a transmitter, not a maker."

Bristol

URIAN R. THOMAS

The Preacher's Finger-Post.

Subject : TRUE HUMAN GREATNESS.

"But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord."—2 Cor. iii. 18.

First: *Every man has a strong natural instinct for greatness.* All, young and old, rich and poor, in every sphere of life, crave for such distinction amongst their compeers as will arrest attention and command applause.

Secondly: *A wrong direction of this instinct originates enormous mischief.* Sometimes it is directed to worldly power, then it begets tyranny; sometimes to worldly property, then it begets monopoly and fraud; sometimes to worldly wisdom, then it begets intellectual pedantry and pride.

Thirdly: *The mission of Christianity is to give a right direction to this instinct.* Of all the systems on earth it alone teaches man what true greatness is, and the way to attain it. The text teaches three things concerning it:—

I. That the IDEAL of true

greatness is divine. What is the glory of the Lord? (See Exod. xviii. 19.) This passage teaches that the Eternal regarded His glory as consisting not in the immensity of His possessions, the almightiness of His power, or the infinitude of His wisdom, but in His goodness. "I will make all my goodness pass before thee:" as if He had said, My glory is in My goodness. *Yes, the true greatness of man consists in moral goodness.* To be good is to be great.

First: This greatness is *soul-satisfying*,—and this alone. Secondly: This greatness *commands the respect of all moral intelligences*,—and this alone. Thirdly: This greatness is *attainable by all persons*,—and this alone. Fourthly: This greatness *we carry into the otherworld*,—and this alone.

II. The PATH of true greatness is moral transformation. "Beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image." In the context a comparison is drawn between Moses and Christ in relation to glory, and whilst both are

represented as the recipients, the representatives, and reflectors of Divine glory, that glory as seen in Christ was more abundant, more lasting, more manifest, than in Moses. How is this moral transformation to be effected? in other words, how is man to come into possession of God's glory? The text suggests an answer to the question. First: It is by means of an *instrument*—glass. What is the glass? The mirror that reflects the glory of God. Nature is a glass. Judaism is a glass. Christ is a glass. He is the brightest glass of all—reflects more divine rays upon the universe than any other.

Secondly: By means of *attention* to that instrument. "By looking." Men look at the glitterings of worldly glory, not on the glowing beams of the divine, and hence they are not changed into the divine. Observe (1) A concentrated looking on Christ commands *admiration*. (2) Admiration commands *imitation*. What we admire we imitate. Christ is the most imitable being in the universe, because His character is the most *admirable*, the most *transparent*, the most *unchangeable*. (3) Imitation ensures *assimilation*. Thus children become like their parents, &c. Here, then, is the path to true glory—a path clear as day, certain as

eternity. All who tread this path must become glorious.

III. The LAW of true greatness is progressive. "From glory to glory." Glory in God is unprogressive, but in all intelligent creatures it is ever advancing. Two things show that the human soul is made for endless advancement. First: *Facts in connection with its nature*. (1) Its appetites are intensified by its supplies. (2) Its capacities augment with its attainments; the more it has the more it is capable of receiving. (3) Its productiveness increases with its productions. Not so with the soil of the earth, or the trees of the forest, all wear themselves out. Secondly: *Arrangements in connection with its history*. There are three things which always serve to bring out the latent powers of the soil. (1) A new relationship. The wondrous powers and experiences slumbering in every human heart of maternity and fatherhood are brought out by relationship. (2) New sceneries. New sceneries in nature often start in the mind feelings and powers unknown before. (3) New engagements. Many a man who was thought a mere dolt in one occupation, transferred to another has become a brilliant genius. These three soul-developing forces we have here, we shall have for ever.

IV. The AUTHOR of true

as is the SPIRIT OF
 'Even as by the Spirit
 Lord.' How does the
 of the Lord do it? As
 as everything else in
 it, renewing the face of
 earth, lighting up the
 sun, bringing round
 seasons, supplying the
 of all life,—by means,
 these means are here
 "beholding as in a

ILLUSION. How trans-
 tly valuable is Chris-
 ! Valuable, inasmuch
 reflects the human soul
 glory, and indicates
 of realising it.*

—
 : THE RESTLESSNESS
 OF SIN.

wicked are like the troubled
 sea it cannot rest, whose
 cast up mire and dirt."—
 vii. 20.

Who are the wicked? Not
 all who think and feel
 of the wrong, but all
 have not the right spirit
 them—supreme sym-
 with the supremely
 There are degrees in
 wickedness as well as in good-
 All bad men are not
 equally bad. Sin has its
 its ear, and its full

corn in the ear. Now what
 is predicated here of the wicked
 is restlessness: "They are
 like the troubled sea," there
 is no repose within them.
 There are currents within and
 forces without that keep them,
 like the ocean, day and night
 in an agitation more or less
 tumultuous. "Whose waters
 cast up mire and dirt." Who
 that has stood on the beach
 in the fury of a storm and
 watched the wild waves roll,
 foam, and roar, can fail to
 see in this figure the picture
 not only of nations in bloody
 campaigns, but of wicked
 men individually when roused
 into rage?

Now there are certain
 things that render it impossi-
 ble for wicked men to have
 true repose. What are they?

I. DISAPPOINTMENTS. The
 sinner is doomed to perpetual
 disappointments. He expects
 happiness in certain pursuits
 and objects that cannot
 according to the constitution
 of his soul yield him true
 satisfaction. He reposes
 trust, and places reliance in
 objects as frail as the reed and
 as uncertain as the clouds,
 and he is doomed to have his
 hopes blasted, his plans
 broken up, and his confidence
 destroyed. Hence he is the
 subject of perpetual vexations
 and annoyances, for disap-
 pointment is evermore a soul-
 agitating power; it comes
 down sometimes upon the
 heart like a strong south-

most of the thoughts contained
 in this article will be found more
 amplified in "Homilist,"
 (L., Vol. III., p. 217. The
 , however, containing it has
 been out of print.

wester, stirring it to its very depths. What are they?

II. **COMPUNCTIONS.** Where there is sin there must come sooner or later remorse and moral chagrin. An accusing conscience is not a mere wind that passes over the soul, rippling its *surface*: it is a volcanic force in its *centre*, shaking every part. It gave Cain no rest, it made Belshazzar totter, Felix tremble, it drove Judas to the rope. Charles Churchill has well described its violent actions:—

“No, 'tis the tale which angry conscience tells,
When she with more than tragic horror swells
Each circumstance of guilt, when, stern, but true,
She brings bad actions forth into review:
And, like the dread handwriting on the wall,
Bids late remorse awake at reason's call;
Armed at all points, bids scorpion vengeance pass,
And to the mind hold up reflection's glass.
The mind, which starting leaves the heart-felt groan,
And hates that form she brands to be her own.”

What are they?

III. **SELFISH PASSIONS.** Selfishness, which is the essence of wickedness, is the great disturbing force in the moral universe: it is the parent of all the fiends that rage and riot in hell. Avarice, ambition, jealousy, revenge, envy, anger, these are some of its fiendish progeny. In what-

ever souls these a wherever selfishness must be in some form their agitations are table.

CONCLUSION. But selfishness is still thy character, in v expectest peace: it come; the eternal the universe will pr advent to thine heart may be now and the thee a little lull and have seen old ocean rently sleep in the m but it is only to b into wildest fury by that was bursting head, and that was eve of breaking forth roar of thunder, the lightning, and the mighty winds. Bel peace is only to b in that supreme lo centres the soul in t God of Peace.

—
Subject: HUMAN LONGING.

“And Jacob was left Genesis xxxii. 24. “Alone shall come near the Exodus xxiv. 2. “And alone saw the vision.”—
“And he alone on the Mark vi. 47.

The subject of the text is *human longing*. Though men are gre like animals, and s moral beings, and thu together in feeling, t and action, they hav *dividuality* that may

as be submerged, but
r destroyed, that must at
e time or other be felt as
greatest fact of existence.
y man does stand alone
e universe before God,
sooner or later every man
undly realises the awful

He feels himself alone.
n does he do so?

IN HIS PROFOUNDEST
IGHTS. When thoughts
up from man's nature
h stir the deepest senti-
ts within him—and such
ghts come at times to
—then he feels himself
e. A crowd may surround
but to no one can he
k out what is within him.
eels that he has an orbit
is own leagues distant
all others. Like Daniel,
ees the visions alone," he
ot depict them to other

Hence it turns out
the greatest souls on this
i always feel themselves
most lonely, they have
in them so little in-
ght or sympathy that
s on the common mind,
they stand "alone on
land" of their own soli-
experience. Great souls
vermore lonely. When
man feel himself lonely?

IN HIS MORAL CONVIC-
s. When a deep con-
sness of moral obli-
ns, and a saddening
of shortcomings and
gressions, seize on the
then, too, comes the
g of loneliness. We

feel detached from all, iso-
lated, like an island sur-
rounded on all sides by the
infinite. Divine claims come
pressing on us which none
but ourselves can meet. Sins
oppress us for which none
but ourselves can be held re-
sponsible. We bear our own
burdens. When does man
feel himself lonely?

III. In HIS GREATEST SOR-
rows. Every "heart knoweth
his own bitterness, and a
stranger doth not intermeddle
with his joy." In deep sor-
rows men instinctively with-
draw from society and seek
some Gethsemane of solitude,
there to pour out their anguish
into the ears of the Infinite.
A wounded heart, like the
wounded beast or bird, seeks
a hiding-place. A greater
outrage can scarcely be com-
mitted than to intrude on the
notice of your fellow-man in
grief. As fire separates par-
ticle from particle in the con-
densest substances, great sor-
rows separate soul from soul.
When does man feel himself
lonely?

IV. In his DYING MOMENTS.
Every man must go down
unto the Jordan alone. De
Quincey has said, "All men
come into this world alone,
all leave it alone." Pascal
said that the solitariness of
death was the bitterest pang
of humanity. Still, as a rule,
perhaps, men like to be alone
in that dread hour. Horace
Walpole said: "I am like

animals, like to hide myself alone when I am dying." Sir Walter Scott says that his aunt turned every one out of the room to draw her last breath alone. And so also did his uncle and several members of his family. And Southey said: "It has always been my wish to die far from my friends, to crawl like a dog into some corner and to expire unseen." But whether we like the loneliness in death or not, we must have it. The time comes when our nearest friends must leave us; they cannot step down with us into the stream that empties itself into the great unknown.

"Thou must go forth alone, my soul, thou must go forth alone,
To other scenes, to other worlds,
that mortal hath not known.
Thou must go forth alone, my soul,
to tread the narrow vale;
But He, whose word is sure, hath said
His comforts shall not fail.
His rod and staff shall comfort thee
across the dreary road,
Till thou shalt join the blessed ones
in Heaven's serene abode."

**Subject: A SILENT SERMON
BY AN ANGEL OF GOD,
WITH THE INTERPRETATION
THEREOF.**

"For the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it. His countenance was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow: and for fear

of him the keepers did shake, and became as dead men."—Matt. xxviii. 2—4.

I. THE SILENT SERMON.
Preaching without words is often most eloquent. God's kingdom of nature is full of silent preachers. The sun in his silent race declares the glory of God. Any one who has ever stood upon the deck of a vessel in mid-ocean at midnight, will remember how impressive is the effect of the silence from above, reflected, as it were, in the silence from beneath; how powerfully both preach to the inner nature of almost every man. Yet "No speech nor language, their voice is not heard."

How powerful is the appeal, also, often made to the Christian's heart by the silent broken bread, the silent poured-out wine, recalling, as it does, the broken body and poured-out blood of his Lord.

And what a sermon was this, when the angel of the Lord, gliding noiselessly as a ray of light to his Master's sealed tomb, rolled back the stone and sat upon it. The gospel narrative seems to contradict the idea conveyed in many mediæval pictures where Christ is represented as Himself bursting the tomb; evidently His mighty servant prepared the way, and the Lord of Glory walked forth in the majesty of calm and silent conquest.

II. THE INTERPRETATION OF THE SERMON. Look at this shining messenger sitting at the opened tomb. What does he say on behalf of Heaven, and what to the powers of earth?

1. On behalf of Heaven he says *Amen* to the declaration of Christ before the council, "I am the Son of God." He declares Heaven's acceptance of Christ's atonement. "I lay down my life for the sheep," said Jesus. The angel answers, "It is enough."

2. What is the significance of the terror-stricken soldiers and the broken seal, representing, as they do, ignorance and indifference on the one hand, and priestly craft on the other? That Roman guard, injured as they were to the brightest beams of the southern sun, yet falling back before the dazzling light betokening moral greatness and purity, were symbols of the darkness of ignorance and indifference fleeing before the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in Christ as proclaimed by His messengers. That broken seal, defying the priestly power that would keep the Saviour in the tomb, says of all who would now attempt the like, "He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh, the Lord will have them in derision." The Christian may read in this glorious sight, "He was

raised again for our justification," or "acquittal."

W. HARRIS.*

Camberwell.

Subject: SIN: A SOUL-PROSPECT.

"My sin is ever before me."—
Pa. li. 3.

Whatever the virtues of David, and they were many, he was albeit a great sinner. In the text perhaps he refers to one particular sin, with whose aggravating circumstances we are all familiar. Let us for a moment look at sin as a soul-prospect, and we offer the following remarks:—

I. It is a very DISTRESSING prospect. Man can look at nothing more terrible. The rugged, burning hills before the traveller, the hurricane cradling in the heavens before the mariner, the gallows hanging before the eye of the man condemned to die: all these are terrible prospects. But scarcely less terrific is that of having a man's sin always before him. As he looks at it he knows that in its black clouds are the thun-

* We greatly regret that in consequence of our absence from home we had no time for seeing a revise of the last number of the 'Homilist.' It has, therefore, one great mistake, namely, a short discourse by the author of this sketch has attached to it the name of Dr. Bushnell.—
EDITOR.

ders and lightnings of retribution.

II. It is a very INEVITABLE prospect. As certain as the laws of nature bring on light, the laws of conscience and memory will bring up before the eye the hideous forms of sin. It is true that in this probationary state, and in this world fraught with innumerable blessings, the sinner is often able to turn away his eye from it. But the time comes when it reappears. In the regions of retribution it stands on the horizon of the soul black, immovable, throwing all else into starless midnight.

III. It is a very SALUTARY prospect. That is, it is salutary *here and now*. It is well for the sinner to keep his sin ever before him here. It serves at least four useful ends. It serves:—

First: *To humble the soul*. Pride is an evil of no secondary enormity; it is one of the most fiendish of the fiends.

Who that keeps his sin before him can be proud? Who can say I am not as other men? It serves:—

Secondly: *To reconcile to painful providences*. The man who is unconscious of his sinfulness is the man who murmurs under his sufferings. He who has his sin before him, instead of complaining of his trials, will wonder that they are not a thousandfold as great. It serves:—

Thirdly: *To prepare for the gospel*. The mission of the gospel is to “put away sin,” to sweep the cloud clear away from the horizon of the soul, and to remove from within all the noxious elements from which it springs. It is when a man has his sin before him that the message of the gospel sounds as glad tidings. He feels it to be liberty to the captive, pardon to the condemned, light to the benighted, salvation to the lost.

YOUNG LIFE.—I would not lessen the pleasures of your life. I would not cool your blood, nor throw one shade over those bright and glowing prospects which imagination pictures; but I would have you take life as it is, and enjoy it for what it is worth. Enjoy it, as I have often enjoyed on my native mountains the setting of a summer's sun. The streaks of glory which played upon the western sky, as the great orb went down in blazing splendour, kindled within me unutterable emotions of delight, yet I felt, as I admired, that the magnificent scene would soon vanish, and all above and below would be darkness.

Seeds of Sermons from the Minor Prophets.

If the Bible as a whole is inspired, it is of vast importance that all its Divine ideas should be brought to bear upon the living world of men. Though the pulpit is the organ Divinely intended for this work, it has been doing it hitherto in a miserably partial and restricted method. It selects isolated passages, and leaves whole chapters and books for the most part untouched. Its conduct to the Minor Prophets may be taken as a case in point. How seldom are they resorted to for texts, and yet they abound with splendid passages throbbing with Divine ideas. It is our purpose to go through this section of the Holy Word; selecting, however, only such verses in each chapter and book as seem the most suggestive of truths, of the most vital interest, and universal application.

We begin with HOSEA. The remembrance of some facts connected with this man will greatly help us in our endeavours to reach the meaning and feel the power of certain of his utterances. He was a native of Israel, and lived in Samaria about 700 or 800 years B.C. His prophecy seems to have embraced a period of about 60 years, from Jeroboam's death to Hezekiah's ascension to the throne. He was contemporary with Isaiah, and preceded Joel, Jonah, and Amos. His prophecies are directed almost exclusively to the ten tribes who had sunk into the deepest idolatry. His style, as a writer, is very peculiar. "It is," says De Witte, "abrupt, unrounded, and brilliant, his rhythm hard, leaping, and violent." Like a bee he has been said to fly from one flower to another, to suck the honey from all the blossoms.

HOSEA.

No. XIX.

Subject: SAD ASPECTS OF CHARACTER.

"Ephraim, he hath mixed himself among the people; Ephraim is cake not turned. Strangers have devoured his strength, and he knoweth it not: yea, gray hairs are here and there upon him, yet he knoweth not."—Hosea vii. 8, 9.

The primary application of these words to Ephraim is obvious from the context, and from the history of Israel at the time. We shall use them as indicating certain bad aspects of human character.

I. WRONG COMPANIONSHIP. Ephraim, he hath mixed himself among the people." The inference is here not to the

punishment or dispersion of the Israelites among the nations, but to the state in which Israel was at the time. Heaven's plan was, that the Hebrew people should separate from the nations, and be holy to Him (Lev. xx. 24—26); to be as Balaam predicted, "a people dwelling alone" (Num. xxiii. 9). But in opposition to this the ten tribes had mingled with the heathen, learned their works and served their idols. Now, what is a wrong mixing with the people? Not *intermixture in marriages*. It appears to us that the mingling of the different tribes of mankind in matrimonial alliances is, according to the plan of the Creator, highly promotive of the good of the entire race. Not *intercourse in business*. Such is the state of

human society that good men are bound in worldly affairs to have dealings with the irreligious and depraved. *Not associating with them for spiritual usefulness.* Those who think that the saints of God should shut themselves up from the world, dwell in monasteries, and live as hermits, make a great mistake. The more divine love and truth a man has in him, the more bound is he to be out in the world, and to let the light of his doctrines and his character flash widely and strongly upon the heart of his contemporaries. The man who has "mixed himself with others," does as did the ten tribes now, for worldly advantage and unholy gratifications make bad people companions. It is said that Pythagoras, before he admitted any one into his school, inquired who were his intimates, justly concluding that they who could choose immortal companions would not be much profited by his instructions.

II. MORAL WORTHLESSNESS. "Ephraim is a cake not turned." The easterns bake their bread on the ground, covering it with embers, and turn it every ten minutes to bake it thoroughly without burning it (1 Kings xix. 6). Without the turning it would be charcoal on one side and dough on the other, and the bread would be worthless. Worthlessness is the idea. Ephraim or Israel—for the words seem to be used convertibly—had become *utterly useless* in a spiritual sense. It no longer fulfilled its divine mission maintaining and promoting the worship of the one true and liv-

ing God. As the unturned cake would be thrown away as utterly unfit for human food, Israel was to be thrown away by God as utterly unfit to fulfil its mission. What a sad thing to be utterly worthless in a moral sense; salt that has lost its savour, only fit to be trodden under foot; trees that have lost their fruit, only fit for the fire! Usefulness is the grand purpose of our being. The man who does not make the world better than he found it, must be accursed.

III. SOCIAL DESPOILMENT. "Strangers have devoured his strength, and he knoweth it not." The reference probably here is to the fact that Shalmaneser, king of Assyria, finally carried away Israel captive because of the defection of Hoshea, king of Israel, to So, king of Egypt (see 2 Kings xiii. 7; xv. 19, 20; xvii. 3, 6). In consequence of their unholy mingling with idolatrous people, and their dependence upon foreign nations, they got rifled of their property, their power, and their influence. Thus, strangers devoured their strength. How many souls in all ages lose their "strength" under the influence in which they mingle! Their intellectual power, social sympathies, moral sensibilities, get used up, and they become the mere creatures of circles and circumstances. The man of society "has his strength devoured;" he loses freedom and force and manhood.

IV. UNCONSCIOUS DECAY. "Yea, gray hairs are here, and there upon him, yet he knoweth not." Moral strength goes so slowly from men that they are often not con-

scious of its loss until they are reduced to the utmost prostration. Thus with Samson, "He wist not that the spirit of the Lord had departed from him." Nations have their gray hairs, and they don't know it; churches have their gray hairs, and are unconscious of them. So also with individuals; decay is so gradual that the subject is unconscious that death is working its ruin.

CONCLUSION. Let us look at these aspects of character and learn practical wisdom. Form no friendship with sinners: come out from amongst them—"the companion of fools shall be destroyed." Avoid a worthless life. Be not like the unturned cake; render some service to the universe. Allow not the social influences of your sphere to steal away your strength, to eat up your manhood; conclude not that decay is not working within you because you are unconscious of it. Wake up to the great realities of your spiritual being, and be strong in the Lord.

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No. XX.

Subject: THE SILLINESS OF SIN.

"Ephraim also is like a silly dove without heart."—Hosea vii. 11.

There is much force and beauty in this comparison of Ephraim to a "silly dove without heart," or rather without understanding, which when pursued by a bird of prey trusts to the rapidity of its flight; that is, relies upon its own powers for the means of escape, instead of at once throwing itself into the nearest recess,

where the interference of man or the narrowness of the place might render it secure from molestation. Israel, instead of taking shelter under the wing of the Almighty, who is a God *near at hand*, and not *afar off*, rested his hope of defence upon the celerity of his negotiations—stretching his wing towards Assyria or Egypt; but in the length of the flight is overtaken, secured, and dies in the cruel talons of his unrelenting pursuer."—*Pictorial Bible*. The passage may be used to illustrate the *silliness of sin*. Men under the influences of sin are as silly as the dove. What do naturalists say about the dove?

I. It is too silly TO DEFEND ITS OWN. Most creatures will stand by their young and fight for them to the last, but the dove, it seems, cares but little for them, and allows them to be captured without resistance. Ephraim had sunk into this state; his most distinguished blessings were going from him, and he struggled not to retain them. The sinner will not battle with the devil to defend his own—his force of thought—his sensibility of conscience—his freedom of will—his purity of love—he allows these precious things to be taken from him without a struggle.

It is said that the dove is—

II. Too silly TO FEEL ITS LOSS. It is said that the dove will lose its nest and not feel it. The tree seems as attractive to it without its nest as with it. Men under the influence of sin do not feel their loss. Though sin has broken up their nest, they still strive to make the world a resting-place. What-

ever is taken from them, they still cling to earthly things.

It is said that the dove is—

III. Too silly TO ESCAPE DANGER. More dull than other fowls, it discovers not its perils, it "hasteneth to the snare, and knoweth not it is for her life" (Prov. vii. 23). Thus it was with the ten tribes politically, and thus it is with all souls morally in their fallen state. They will not flee to the right place of safety—too silly to be calm under trial. It is said of the dove that it has not courage to stay in the dove-house when frightened, where it is safe under the careful protection of its owner, but flutters and hovers, seeking rest first in one place and then in another, and thus exposes itself to new and greater dangers. Thus with Ephraim: instead of settling down under the protection of

God he hurried forth in quest of foreign help, and was the more exposed to calamities and ruin. Thus, too, with souls under the influence of sin.

CONCLUSION. Sin is folly. The fool and the sinner are, in God's vocabulary, convertible terms. O how sad it is to see human souls hovering and fluttering about like silly doves, with no sense of their loss, no resting-place, no security, no peace.

"A soul immortal spending all her fires,
Wasting her strength in strenuous idleness,
Thrown into tumult, raptured or alarmed—
At night this scene can threaten or indulge—
Resembles ocean into tempest wrought,
To waft a feather, or to drown a fly."

Young.

The Pulpit and its Handmaids.

ORIGINAL SIMILITUDES.

FIRST LOVE.—"The soul strikes its roots deeply into the first scenes of its life, and those roots may be as fine as the finest web, but they are stronger than adamantine chain. Nothing can break the mystic fibre. Though a thousand leagues away, the soul feels their vibrations."

SOCIETY AND SOLITUDE.—
"The soul resembles a tree in this, it requires the publicity of

the open heavens, and the secrecy of the hidden depths, in order to grow to perfection. The spirit of the tree must go down into the dark, quiet chambers of the earth to drink nourishment into its roots, and up into the lofty branches to be shone on by the sun, and tossed by the tempest."

"THERE abideth then these three: the world, the soul, and Christ-like love; but the great-

est of these three is *love*. The world is nothing without the soul, and the soul is nothing without love. Fill thy soul with love, and thou wilt fill thy universe with all that is good and glorious."

THE DEVIL.—"Do not suppose the great enemy of souls is somewhere in the clouds. He is incarnate, he dwells among men; 'he worketh in the children of disobedience.' He is in the craft of the false priest, who officiates at the altar, and in the superstitious services of his deluded votaries; he inspires the mercenary merchant in business and works in the countless tricks of trade; he is in the overbearing arrogances of one class, and the cringing servilities of another; he fills the haunts of pleasure; he plays seductively in the smiles of beauty, and breathes in the song that warms the passions; he speaks in the words that shake the faith in virtue, and guides the pen of the thousand scribblers who minister to the wishes of the sceptic, the tastes of the depraved, and the cravings of the sensual. Look for the devil in man. Man is the tempter of man."

AN APPROVING CONSCIENCE.—"All Nature smiles the sunshine of her approbation on him who has the well-done of his conscience."

WASTE.—"In morals it is an eternal law, that waste brings want. He that wastes the spiritual blessings with which Heaven endows him, must be reduced to utter spiritual destitution."

THE FIRST SIN.—"Let the

mind once err from virtue, and begin a downward course, and, like the cascade from the sloping hills, its momentum will increase as it rolls; like the arrow from the bow of the archer, its slightest divergence at the start from the straight line will widen till it falls."

"EVERY voice in nature is a call to moral reflection."

"DEEP emotions sigh for solitude."

THE BIBLE.—"It is only as we look at the Bible in the light of our own intuitions, spiritual wants, aspirations, experiences, current events, that we get at its living import. To be rightly interpreted, it must be read in the light of our profoundest moral experience."

SANCTIMONIOUSNESS.—"Not the men, I have learnt, that make the greatest grimaces at the world, parade most their 'principles,' and battle with society for what they call their 'rights,' who have within them most of the divine and magnanimous spirit of Christianity. As a rule, it seems to me that the smaller a man is, in a moral sense, the greater agitator against public institutions, and the greater censor of public conduct. As in literature, the smallest intellects are the readiest critics, so in morals, the smallest souls are the severest censors."

CHRIST MAGNETIC TO THE TRUE.—"Souls touched by heavenly influences will move on to the Christ of God, as regardless of mere social usages as the incoming billows are indifferent to the empty shells

that glitter on the beach. Christ is the centre of such souls, and they will pulsate and heave towards Him as the waves of the ocean to the queen of night."

TEARS.—"Genuine tears are the involuntary and faithful expressions of the soul. The soul's sorrow or joy—for joy weeps—guilt or innocence—for insulted virtue has its tears—glistens in the 'pearly drop.' Tears relieve the soul; they discharge its oppressive clouds. Tears fight for the soul; they 'are prevailing orators,' they win triumphs which neither the infernal sword, nor divine speech, could ever achieve. A *true* tear is electric to the *true*."

THE UNITY OF THINGS.—"All things in the creation are bound together by the great chain of inter-dependence; a chain, the motion of whose every link propagates an influence that travels on from end to end."

LITTLE ONES.—"Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones." Despise them not! They have their angel guards, they live at Bethel, and from their feet a ladder reaches to the opened heavens by which they come and go."

DEATH.—"The death of a good man is the quenching of a light in our sky; the drying-up of a fountain on our earth."

EVIL.—"Evil is a serpent enfolding all things in its deadly coil; it is a dark cold mist hanging over every scene, intercepting the rays of the sun, and checking the growth of nature; it is a miasma impregnating the

atmosphere and causing and death in every breath."

SELFISHNESS.—"It impairs the intellect, enfeebles the eye, fetters its operation, and turns the reflective man ivy about the oakling, up its vital sap, and down to its own dime."

LOVE.—"Love breaks the sealed apocalypse and leads all the powers of the soul to join in their jubils."

SIN.—"Sin is a revelation of our nature, of our interests; it is lasting No to Infinite

FRIENDSHIP.—"Friendship is better than wealth. It expresses the love of a true man, the sympathy of a noble even in poverty, is better to be a millionaire or a beggar than to be unloved."

INSIGNIFICANCE.—"But tiny leaves in the growing forest of life. If we fall and are not remembered, our ashes may strengthen to the roots of coming generations."

THEOLOGY.—"True religion is but divine love in intellectual costume, more than costume,—*body*, with a warm heart beating every pore, and working out a beneficent design through every member."

"SPEECH is oftener a substitute than the vehicle of thought."

"THE dead calm is the cradle of the storm."

Homiletical Prebriaries.

No. LXVII.

Subject: GOD IN HUMAN HISTORY.

“Shall not the judge of all the earth do right?”—Gen. xviii. 25.

This is the utterance of Abraham in one of the most stirring chapters in his remarkable biography. Two thoughts are suggested in this utterance. I. God **WORKS** in human history. This Abraham felt now, and this is an undoubted fact. God works as truly in the lives of individuals, families, communities, nations, as He does in the universe at large. (1) He originates all the good in human history. Whatever is pure, true, benevolent, just, in the history of the past, or condition of the present, is from Him. All good in human life are streams from Him, the Great Fountain. (2) He controls all the evil. There are thousands of examples in history to show that He subordinates evil to good, makes the wrath of man to praise Him, and the devil himself His servant. The other thought suggested here is—II. God **WORKS** **RIGHTEOUSLY** in human history. Abraham meant either that God *ought* to do right, or that he *will* do right. Both are true. Deep in the natures of all men is the feeling that there is an *oughtness* with God Himself, that there is a course of conduct in relation to men which He is morally bound to pursue. As He implanted this feeling, is not its teaching true? But perhaps Abraham meant that He will do right. The language is assurance on that question. “Thou art sure to do right, whatsoever thou doest is right.” When men see good defeated and evil victorious, wickedness prospering and virtue failing, and order giving way to confusion, they may sometimes have a doubt as to the rectitude of God’s procedure. Still He does right; the right is ever done whether we recognise it or not. The day hastens when we shall all feel this.

No. LXVIII.

Subject: INDIVIDUALISM.

"Sayest thou this thing of thyself, or did others tell it thee of me?"—
John xviii. 34.

These are the words of Christ to Pilate as He stood before him in the "judgment hall"—He the apparent prisoner, but the true judge; Pilate the apparent judge, but the real prisoner. We take them here as suggesting an appeal that may be made to two classes in relation to Christianity. I. To the INFIDEL. To the infidel we may say when he urges his objections to Christianity, "Sayest thou this of thyself, or did others tell it thee?" (1) When he objects to the *divinity* of the Bible. When he talks of its difficulties, discrepancies, states how he thinks the manuscripts were produced and how they were compiled, all in order to show that the book cannot be divine, we say to him, "Sayest thou this thing of thyself, or did others tell it thee?" Art thou stating all these things on hearsay, or hast thou thoroughly and honestly investigated the question for thyself? If thou hast not done this, be silent, it is a personal question. The men from whom thou hast heard thy objections perhaps never examined for themselves, but received them from others, and they from others too. Hush! think for thyself. (2) When he objects to the *doctrines* of the Bible. When you hear him dilate on the absurdity of the incarnation, the atonement, the resurrection, &c., ask him, "Sayest thou this of thyself?" Hast thou examined these doctrines so as to get an independent judgment? if not, hold thy tongue. In these questions every man is to be fully persuaded in his own mind. We know of no better way to deal with moral infidels than this: silence them in their babblement by saying, "Sayest thou this of thyself, or did others tell thee? As for us, we speak what we do know and testify what we have seen." The words suggest an appeal that may be made—II. To PREACHERS. When you hear men talk nonsense, even blasphemy, in the pulpit, in the name of the Bible, when you hear them advocate sacramentalism, reprobation, divine wrath to be quenched only by the blood of the innocent, the literal purchase of a certain number of souls to salvation by the mysterious agonies of the Son of God, and all such things as these, say to them, "Sayest thou these things of thyself?" "Hast thou found out these things from the word of God by thine own devout, honest, independent, inductive

study, or hast others told thee? Hast thou not got all these horrid dogmas that misrepresent Christianity, outrage the intellect, and shock the moral reason of mankind, from others—from old theologies, hoary creeds, and floating traditions? No man is a true preacher who does not utter the things which he has “seen and felt and handled for himself.” Half the pulpits in England would be shut if the people would ask the preacher, “Sayest thou this thing of thyself, or did others tell it thee?”

No. LXIX. •

Subject: LUX E TENEBRIS.

“At evening time it shall be light.”—Zechariah xiv. 7.

This old promise has received a thousand fulfilments, is receiving fulfilments every day, and will to the end of time. Nations that have fallen under the shadows of evening have often realised this truth. When the foot of the conqueror was about stamping on their heart, and the night of despair was settling on them, deliverance has come, light has broken on the darkness. Churches that have passed into twilight, and about sinking into the night of extinction, have in unnumbered instances experienced the truth of the promise. The world at large had a grand fulfilment of it in the advent of Christ. Evening had settled on the pagan and Jewish world, the lights of the old philosophies and religions were all but quenched, when the divine *logos* rose like a sun into the heavens. But we may mention a few instances in individual life where fulfilments of the promise are abundant.

I. In the PROCESS of REPENTANCE. In passing through repentance, through the regions of a godly sorrow for sin, what darkness gathers around the soul. All the stars of hope, and the lights of self-righteousness are extinguished, and sometimes deep and horrible is the darkness that overcasts the heart. But then comes the light, Christ appears, “thy sins are all forgiven,” &c., &c.

II. In the EVENTS of LIFE. How often the good man in passing through the world is brought into darkness, purposes broken, plans frustrated, hopes blasted, and he knows not whither to look. Just when it is not only evening with him, but almost midnight, light breaks forth, his heart is cheered, his path is made clear, and his energies are renewed.

III. In the ARTICLE of DISSOLUTION. Death is felt to be an evening with man. “The valley of the shadow.” Most look forward to it as a

terrible night; but the Christly, when the evening has come and the shadows have fallen densely all around, have found the breaking of the night. It was so with Dr. Johnson, who through life, it would seem, looked forward to the last hour with horror and alarm; but when the evening came, light came, joy seized his withered veins, and one bright gleam shone all around his heart. All men wish to die in the light. Goethe cried out in dying, "More light, more light;" and all will have it the centre of whose soul is the light of the world.

Literary Notices.

[We hold it to be the duty of an Editor either to give an early notice of the books sent to him for remark, or to return them at once to the Publisher. It is unjust to praise worthless books; it is robbery to retain unnoticed ones.]

THE REVIEWER'S CANON.

In every work regard the author's end,
Since none can compass more than they intend.

DETACHED LINKS : EXTRACTS FROM THE WRITINGS OF JOSEPH PARKER, D.D. By JOSEPH LUCAS. GEMS FROM TALMAGE : ONE THOUSAND BRILLIANT PASSAGES FROM THE WRITINGS OF REV. T. DE WITT TALMAGE, D.D. By REV. J. W. ATKINSON. London : R. Dickinson, 73, Farringdon Street.

MODERN pulpit literature seems to be multiplying its shop windows of jewellery, and they blaze with "gems," with "brillianta," with "diamonds," with "pearls," and "links." Every pulpit author will soon be labouring to get such a shop window. Well, we have no great objection to such windows: they give a brilliancy to the streets at gas-light, arrest the attention of the passer-by, and *may* tempt him to go in and buy some article of real worth. We must have some glitter in this age, we cannot get on without jewels and ribbons "and a' that, and a' that." Of the two works before us we could say much if time and space would permit. Between the authors there is much similarity; both are men of undoubted genius, both are ambitious in style, both labour too obviously for effect, both seem somewhat irreverent, and lack in some measure that indefinable spiritual tenderness that makes sentences electric, both have an unusually affluent vocabulary, both are men well growing in fame. But there are points of contrast in favour of the "Britisher." He deals more with the intellect and the conscience, whilst the other seems always thrilling the nerves and charming the imagination. He has a broader, and we

believe a more Biblical, theology than the other. Dr. Talmage's theological notions are not such as we could hold and yet love the Eternal with an all-adoring and all-trusting affection. Although the American may show more reading, versatility, and heat of imagination, he does not seem to us to equal Dr. Parker in keenness of moral insight, in vigour of intellect, in far-reaching thought, in breadth and depth of a right healthful sympathy for the whole of mankind. Heartily do we rejoice in the high gifts with which Heaven has entrusted both, and in the prosperity which attends their labours. Both are comparatively young, long may they live and grow in the truly divine as they advance in the educational experiences of a ministerial life ! Heartily do we congratulate Dr. Parker on the wonderful sphere of labour which Providence has marked out for him in the centre of the greatest city of the world with abundance of monetary power to back him in his labours.

What shall we say of the volumes themselves ? Why, that they are worth reading not only as the best specimens of the thoughts and style of the respective authors, but as books that furnish spurs to thought.

THE BIBLICAL CYCLOPEDIA. By WILLIAM JONES, M.A. London : W. Tegg.

THIS Cyclopædia contains a complete exposition of the doctrines, laws, precepts, ordinances, institutions, types, and figures of the Bible. Also a biographical and geographical account of the persons and places mentioned in Holy Writ. Though it is not a new work, it has been so revised, corrected, and enlarged as to be up to the present standard of Biblical science. Those who are not able to procure such Cyclopædias as Fairbairn's, Kitto's, or Smith's, will find this to come within their reach and equal to all their ordinary demands. It is about the size of Dr. Eadie's, which is a most excellent work, but this is more theological. We cannot say that we can endorse all its theology, for it seems to us sometimes somewhat narrow and technical. On the whole, however, we heartily recommend it as a very valuable work.

HOMILIST : EDITOR'S SERIES. Vols. I., II., III., IV., V., VI., VII. Publishers : Simpkin and Marshall, London.

HERE are seven handsome volumes, each crowded with every variety of matter bearing on pulpit work. Each volume contains on an average about a hundred sermons more or less full, all condensed to the utmost, and studiously suggestive. Most of the texts of these discourses have seldom been preached from, and all are pre-eminently practical. Besides the sermons they have consecutive homiletic sketches on the BOOK OF JOB, the PSALMS, the GOSPEL OF ST. JOHN, the EPISTLE OF EPHESIANS, and ST. JAMES.

Under the title of PREACHER'S DISSECTING ROOM they contain graphic

sketches of the representatives of the various schools of preachers, such as the SENSATIONAL, including the tragic, the comic, and rhapsodic; the INTELLECTUAL, including the technical, the grand, the philosophic; the SPIRITUAL, including the mystical and intentional; and the MISCELLANEOUS, containing a number of nondescript preachers.

They also contain the "PITH OF MANY RENOWNED SERMONS," both from the ancient and modern writers, such as Hooker, Bushnell, Robertson, &c.

They have also a goodly number of BIBLICAL CRITICISMS contributed by some of the first scholars of the age.

Under the head of "PULPIT AND ITS HANDMAIDS" there is a rich variety of biographic sketches, ILLUSTRATIVE FACTS, and ORIGINAL SIMILITUDES.

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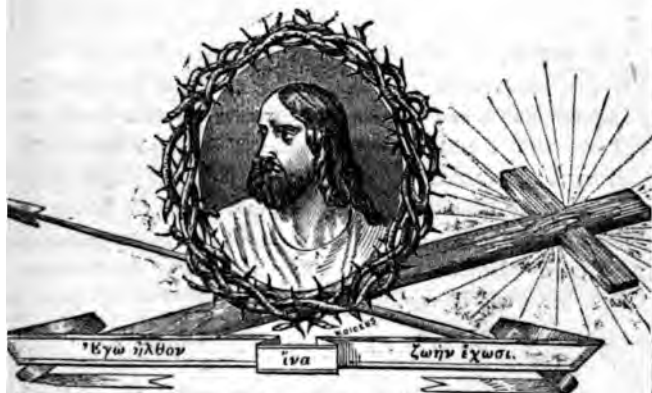
CONDUCTED BY

DAVID THOMAS, D.D.,

OF THE "BIBLICAL LITURGY," "PHILOSOPHY OF HAPPINESS," "GENIUS
OF THE GOSPEL," "COMMENTARY ON ACTS OF THE APOSTLES," ETC.

VOL. VIII. EDITOR'S SERIES.

VOLUME XXXIII. FROM COMMENCEMENT.



"THE LETTER KILLETH, BUT THE SPIRIT GIVETH LIFE."—Paul.

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First: The book has *no finish*. The Editor had not only not the time to give an artistic finish to his productions, but not even the *design*. Their incompleteness is *intentional*. He has drawn some marble slabs together, and hewn them roughly; but has left other hands to delineate minute features, and so polish them into beauty. He has dug up from the Biblical mine some precious ore, smelted a little, but left all the smithing to others. He has presented "germs" which if sown in good soil, under free air and an open sky, will produce fruit that may draw many famishing spirits into the vineyard of the Church.

Secondly: The book has *no denominationalism*. It has no special reference to "*our body*" or to "*our Church*." As denominational strength is not necessarily *soul* strength, nor denominational religion necessarily the religion of humanity, it is the aim of the HOMILIST to minister that which universal man requires. It is for man as a citizen of the universe, and not for him as a limb of the sect.

Thirdly: The book has *no polemical Theology*. The Editor—holding, as he does, with a tenacious grasp, the *cordial* doctrines which constitute what is called the "orthodox creed"—has, nevertheless, the deep and ever-deepening conviction, first, that such creed is but a very small portion of the truth that God has revealed, or that man requires; and that no theological system can fully represent all the contents and suggestions of the great Book of God; and, secondly, that systematic theology is but means to an end. *Spiritual morality is that end*. Consequently, to the *heart* and *life* every Biblical thought and idea should be directed. Your systems of divinity the author will not disparage: but his impression is, that they can no more answer the purpose of the Gospel, than *pneumatics* can answer the purpose of the atmosphere. In the case of Christianity, as well as the air, the world can live without its scientific truths; but it must have the free flowings of their vital elements. Coleridge has well said, "Too soon did the doctors of the Church forget that the heart—the moral nature—was the beginning and the end, and that truth, knowledge, and insight, were comprehended in its expansion."

The Editor would record his grateful acknowledgments to those free spirits of all Churches, who have so earnestly rallied round him; to the many who have encouraged him by their letters, and to those, especially, who have aided him by their valuable contributions. May the "last day" prove that the help rendered has been worthily bestowed; and that the HOMILIST did something towards the spiritual education of humanity, in its endeavour to bring the Bible, through the instrumentality of the pulpit, into a more immediate and practical contact with the every day life of man!

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Holly Bush, Loughborough Park,
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NOTICES OF THE PRESS.

"Without copying Robertson of Brighton, there is a prevailing spirit in this publication which perpetually reminds you of his sublime utterances. Dr. Thomas is a man of a spirit so profound and comprehensive, so catholic and charitable, that the HOMILIST could not be other than that which it is. For the man always underlies the book which he writes. The HOMILIST is so rich in exquisite utterances that the attempt at quotation in this notice would be to commence illimitable enlargement. On the whole, we have two things to remark in connection with this publication—viz., first, that the HOMILIST is the best preacher's annual which we know; second, the last volume is the best of the twenty-six which it concludes, being, indeed, the commencement of a new series. We do not highly laud when we affirm that in the department of religious literature to which it belongs, it has no worthy competitor."—*Dundee Daily Advertiser*.

"That the author is fully equal to the discussion of such topics, few who are acquainted with his qualifications will presume to deny. He is evidently a man of refined taste and cultivated intellect. He has rendered high service to the cause of truth as an expositor and a critic. There are passages which, for richness of imagery and choiceness of rhetoric, have scarcely been surpassed. The very significance and symbolism of language seems to be exhausted in the elegant structure of many of these nervous and inspiring paragraphs."—*Church Standard*.



The Prayer for Wisdom.

(Continued from Vol. XXXII., page 323.)

II.

“Give me now wisdom.”—2 Chron. i. 10.

BUT there is much more than this general feature which attracts us in this youth. Come and see, in the second place, *a king's son who prays exclusively for wisdom*. Assuredly, before the presence of the Infinite One the prince is no more than the beggar; but is not the former exposed to far greater temptations? and was ever a temptation so severe as this for the youthful Solomon? Transport yourself, if you can, entirely into the condition of his inner and outward life. His fairest day has hastened to its evening, and the sweetest youthful dream of a blissful future has taken possession of heart and spirit. At length he has laid himself down to rest in the outer courts of the Lord. “He that sitteth in the tabernacle of the Most High shall pass the night in the shadow of the Almighty.” The festive noise around him is hushed; more faintly begins the light of the sacred lamp to glimmer before his slumber-laden eyes; he lies there alone, as whilom the youthful Samuel. And does *he* not also hear a voice, and does he not on a sudden find himself

irradiated by a light which is not of earth? Yea, truly, there the Lord appears to him—the Lord who knows how to give good to His beloved “as in sleep,” * and presents Himself graciously to him with the permission, “Ask what I shall give thee.” What a word, and how great the concession contained in that word. All the treasure-chambers of God’s infinite favour opened up before the grasp of a single hand. “Ask of me,” says the Possessor of all things, “and choose thyself the blessing which thou desirest above all others. Shall the cedars of Lebanon fall that in thy capital there may arise an edifice of unrivalled splendour? Shall the laurel adorn thy brow, intertwined with the roses of love? Shall thy name be borne upon a thousand tongues, even to the Tigris and Euphrates? and a patriarchal age crown all these blessings?” Who does not involuntarily tremble at the sight of the hand in which such a decision is placed? but who does not also learn to love the youthful king, who even in his dream does not sin; and who desires only wisdom, not in order to shine by it, but in order to be useful? “Give thy servant an understanding heart:” the answer reads elsewhere;† and the meaning of his prayer may be easily conjectured, especially when we remember the sense in which Solomon in the book of Proverbs constantly makes mention of wisdom. He means by it no mere learning, which may be attained to in another way; and just as little that acuteness, versatility, polish, which frequently is almost entirely disconnected with the first principles of moral life. He desires, on the other hand, that practical wisdom which qualifies in every case for the recognising, choosing, and accomplishing of the right, the true, and the good; a wisdom thus which is drawn only from the knowledge of God’s will and law, and which is essentially one with

* Psalm cxxvii. 2.

† 1 Kings iii. 9.

the fear of the Lord. And about this he is concerned; not after, along with, or above other things; but alone and exclusively. He does not even speak of anything else; it does not exist for him at this moment. If he has only wisdom, what does he need besides? Happy Solomon, who hast understood thy deepest need; but who at the same time knowest where satisfaction for this need is to be sought.

III. Or—would this prayer be fruitless? Solomon testifies of better things. Come and see here *a humble one, who prays not in vain*. A *humble one*: upon that word I lay stress, because it is the key to the whole. How strikingly this humility expresses itself, especially in the words of the prayer as preserved in another place.* First, thanksgiving for what is already bestowed or promised; and then, further, “And now, O Lord, my God”—the “my” of a humble faith—“thou hast made thy servant king instead of David my father; and I am but a little child, I know not how to go out or come in,” as my position requires. “A little child” (youth), thus speaks the young man of about twenty years, who had been reminded a few months before by his dying father “that he was a wise man.”† Solomon, at least, has certainly experienced the truth of his own words, “With the lowly is wisdom,” but also at the same time learnt that God will give grace to the humble. It is also manifestly “good in the eyes of the Lord, that he has done this thing;”‡ and that is something so very different from being good in the eyes of men whose favour or friendship we are seeking. Immediately he receives the answer, “Because this was in thine heart . . . the wisdom and the knowledge is granted unto thee.” Will this only say that it had already been given him; so that in reality he had no need at all to ask it? Nay, but rather that it was granted to him in this

* 1 Kings iii. 7.

† 1 Kings ii. 9.

‡ 1 Kings iii. 10.

same hour—in answer to his prayer—in a measure unknown before; and also that it should be constantly granted, so far as was necessary. Anything less than this you surely cannot look for from the Father of spirits, who has His own means of access to the heart and spirit of His human child, in His own miraculous manner. Or should such an actual direct communication on His part, in answer to our prayer, be too great and wonderful for the Lord? “He that planted the ear, shall He not hear? He that formed the eye, shall He not see?” My friends, I know I am moving in a mysterious province, and one fiercely assailed, when I speak of the answering of prayer in the proper sense of the word And yet I retain the courage to ask, Do you not feel how absurd it is to believe in a really living God, and at the same time to doubt the possibility of a definite answer to prayer? But what, shall ye who are evil keep your heart and hands free to hasten, over any obstacle whatever, to the help of your crying child; and God, who is good, shall be either not able or not willing, because He has tied His hand with His own law? Oh, melancholy folly of a race which dreams of freedom for itself, but denies this freedom to the Creator; and, naturally all the time very religious, is on the way to both theoretical and practical abandonment of God. No, come and read here, as it were between the lines of the Scripture of the Old Covenant, the promise of the New. “If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him. But”—the condition is equally simple as it is reasonable—“let him ask in faith, nothing doubting.” *How* prayer is heard, no one may be able fully to explain; but *that* it is heard is for the thoughtful faith raised above all doubt. I at least esteem it the highest consolation of a life which without this belief would sometimes become intolerable, to be able to cling

firmly to the promise, "I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go; I will guide thee with mine eye." Not that you are to look for inner light apart from God's written Word, and still less that this heavenly instruction is to release from the necessity for your own labour and exertion. Solomon says indeed that idleness causes us to wear torn garments; but never that it gives us to wear the crown of true wisdom; and in the domain of science also it is the will of God that man in the sweat of his brow should eat bread. But yet it remains equally true on the other hand that "it is vain for you to rise up early, to sit up late, to eat the bread of sorrows." In the realm of true wisdom no one is crowned who has not in childlike spirit bowed before God. How can we yet doubt, when we know and follow Him who has promised without limitation, "Whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, He shall give it you?" Behold the wisdom of which Solomon had only a dim prescience has in Him personally appeared; in Him, I say, who is the Word, the Wisdom, and the own Image of the Father. Mountains of Galilee, ye have seen Him who was fairer than Solomon in all his glory; hills of Zion, ye have heard from His lips the words, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life." He that followeth Him walketh not in darkness; and whoso is led by His Spirit learns to understand the truth, and becomes by degrees freed from the bondage of every delusion. Are there not those sitting here, who, if need were, could arise and testify how God had in reality, and opportunely, answered their prayer for wisdom; and, to mention no other names from history, is an August Hermann Francke, founder of the Orphan House at Halle, the only one who has begun with the prayer, "O God, if thou dost exist, manifest thyself to me," but has continued to persevere therein until he became at length a hero in the faith? No, the Lord's

hand is not shortened that He cannot deliver out of every depth; it is only our unbelief and our pride which stands in the way of the answer to our prayers. Let the waves of doubt rise high as they will, *this* rock can only be overflowed by them, never borne from its solid foundation. "I love them," says the Supreme Wisdom, "that love me, and they that seek me early (yea, verily!) they shall find me."

IV. And he that finds—but here also, beloved, I cannot do better than follow the narrative of Solomon's dream. Come and see here *a favoured one, who receives much more than he asks for*. We have as yet listened to only half of the heavenly response: thus it continues, "Thereto will I give thee riches, and wealth, and honour, such as no kings have had that have been before thee; neither shall any after thee (in Israel) have the like." No, He who gives that which is of the first necessity, also refuses not that which is less so. Solomon had not even thought of temporal gifts; but his God forgets nothing of all that which may augment the lustre of His throne. "And Solomon awoke, and behold it was a dream."* But what a dream; and what an awakening, beloved. The morning hour of a new life has dawned upon him, and while this master-dreamer descends at once from Gibeon's crest, it is only very soon to rise to a more glorious height before the eye of his own and neighbouring nations. When God's light has been enkindled in his soul there arises for him very soon a light upon every domain of knowledge and science with which he comes in contact. He becomes the devout philosopher, the distinguished humanist, the accomplished student of nature, the richly-gifted framer of proverbs and psalms, the wise physician for many a disease of his day; since true piety forms no compact with stupidity, but rather with knowledge, culture, progress.

* 1 Kings iii. 15.

That which the king has received redounds, spiritually and materially, to the good of the nation, which shares in the benefit. The gold becomes as silver, the silver is esteemed as nothing ; the glory of this prince is reflected far beyond the limits of his kingdom ; a golden age is opened, upon which in after years the nation looked back in sadness. O say, is there not in Solomon a confirmation of his own word, "The blessing of the Lord maketh rich, and He addeth no sorrow with it ?" and do you not think at the same time of that greater word from the sermon on the mount, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you ?" Behold we short-sighted ones frequently seek first the superfluous, as though the necessary would be sure to follow of itself. God in answer to prayer usually gives the indispensable first ; but straightway also adds thereto the useful, the agreeable, the comparatively superfluous. The Lord gives grace, and in that one thing all things lie hid ; yet He adds to grace also honour, and withholds no good thing from them that walk in uprightness. You may object that Solomon was only an exception to the rule, since so many a pupil in the school of the highest wisdom has to contend with cares and want, and is replenished with shame instead of honour ; while the fool revels in honour and abundance. This objection is to a certain extent well grounded ; but only so long as you forget the noble saying of another sage,* "Prosperity is the blessing of the Old Testament ; adversity that of the new." For us, Christians, life's centre of gravity—if I may so express myself—is removed from the "*this side*" to the "*yonder side*," and, living and dying, the Christ has much more to give us than a Solomon could ever dream of. Already I hear a thousand-voiced *Amen* in response to the glorious encomium of Solomon,† "Happy

* Eccl. i. 2.

† Prov. iii. 13—18.

is the man that findeth wisdom, and the man that getteth understanding. . . . She is a tree of life to them that lay hold upon her, and happy is every one that holdeth her fast."

V. *That holdeth her fast*—is it possible to repeat these words without a sense of pain? Hitherto we have been constantly rising in our pilgrimage to Gibeon's height; but if we tarry yet for a moment, and somewhat further grasp the bearing of the text, we see, in conclusion, *an unhappy one who by his own fault has forfeited the blessing of his prayer.* Or can we read of this first manifestation of God in Solomon's life, without at the same time thinking with emotion of the last? * Alas! what a change an interval of about thirty years can make in the little world within. Who lies there upon another hill outside Jerusalem, prostrate before wood and stone, the work of men's hands? Yea, it is the same Solomon who here knelt on Gibeon; but now cold for that which then filled him with transport, regarding perhaps with a smile of doubt and scorn that which formerly seemed to him most desirable; threatened with the displeasure of that same God who had once promised to him His full favour! But yet it is no wonder: the bridegroom of the heavenly Wisdom now aspires to the favour of stranger-princesses, not worthy to stand in her shadow; and well may the aged sinner in his joyless solitude now dream of an approaching judgment of God. . . . Hark, hark, there is raised a voice of accusation from Gibeon's forsaken height! O touching prophecy of so many a sad declension in many a spiritual life, which also had formerly bloomed glorious as a rose, and now is bleak and desolate as a tree in autumn. Striking reminder at the same time of that which once the Mouth of Truth has spoken, "Whosoever in reality hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath." In Solomon has

* 1 Kings xi. 10, 11.

been made manifest for later ages how one may earnestly pray for wisdom, and come forth to traffic in wisdom, and be exceedingly zealous about wisdom, and may obtain reputation and honour on account of wisdom, and yet wander in the paths of the most melancholy folly. Because the prayer of youth has not become that of the life; and wisdom has taken her seat indeed in the outer courts, but not in the innermost sanctuary of the temple of the soul. But unless I am deceived we see in Solomon at the same time the spiritual kinsman of so many a Christian professor in our age of dissolution and fermentation, who, in shorter time than he, has gradually descended from the mountain-heights of faith and prayer into the low marshy grounds of denial and doubt; and who knows indeed whence he is fallen, but not yet in what he will end. A book of Chronicles lies before me; but truly the chronicles of this generation make mention of many a name which formerly gave to hope better things—possibly even a kingship in the domain of true wisdom—and which nevertheless in the end merits nothing better than the epitaph, “He wrought evil in the eyes of the Lord.” Poor Solomon, although we will not despair of thy final repentance, how much better had it been for thee to have died in the first half of thy days! Unhappy man who, like Solomon, seest the glorious morning and mid-day of thy life succeeded by a threatening evening; because thou hast exchanged the wisdom of faith for the folly of unbelief! Christians, what I say unto you I say unto all, Watch, and be in the fear of the Lord all the day long. “Even a glorious Solomon-throne is bordered by an unseen and gloomy depth; but also from this depth there yet sounds forth to us one admonition of Supreme Wisdom, “He that sinneth against me, wrongeth his own soul: all they that hate me love death.”

J. VON OOSTERZEE, D.D.

Homiletic Sketches on the Book of Psalms.

Our Purpose.—Many learned and devout men have gone *philologically* through this *TEHELIM*, this book of Hebrew hymns, and have left us the rich results of their inquiries in volumes within the reach of every Biblical student. To do the mere verbal *hermeneutics* of this book, even as well as it has been done, would be to contribute nothing fresh in the way of evoking or enforcing its Divine ideas. A thorough *HOMILETIC* treatment it has never yet received, and to this work we here commit ourselves, determining to employ the best results of modern Biblical scholarship.

Our Method.—Our plan of treatment will comprise four sections:—(1.) The *HISTORY* of the passage. Lyric poetry, which the book is, is a delineation of living character; and the key, therefore, to unlock the meaning and reach the spirit of the words is a knowledge of the men and circumstances that the poet sketches with his lyric pencil.—(2.) *ANNOTATIONS* of the passage. This will include short explanatory notes on any ambiguous word, phrase, or allusion that may occur.—(3.) The *ANALYSIS* of the passage. A knowledge of the main drift of an author is amongst the most essential conditions for interpreting his meaning.—(4.) The *HOMILETICS* of the passage. This is our main work. We shall endeavour so to group the Divine ideas that have been legitimately deduced, as to suggest such thoughts, and indicate such sermonising methods, as may promote the proficiency of modern pulpit ministrations.

Subjects: Fretful Envy of the Wicked. (3) Facts reveal
its Folly.

“Cease from anger, and forsake wrath;
Fret not thyself in any wise to do evil.
For evil-doers shall be cut off:
But those that wait upon the Lord, they shall inherit the earth.
For yet a little while, and the wicked shall not be;
Yea, thou shalt diligently consider his place, and it shall not be.
But the meek shall inherit the earth;
And shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace.
The wicked plotteth against the just,
And gnasheth upon him with his teeth.
The Lord shall laugh at him;
For he seeth that his day is coming.
The wicked have drawn out the sword, and have bent their bow,
To cast down the poor and needy,
And to slay such as be of upright conversation.
Their sword shall enter into their own heart,
And their bows shall be broken.”—Psalm xxxvii. 3—15.

HISTORY.—See Vol. XXXII., p. 266.

ANNOTATIONS.—Ver. 8.—“*Cease from anger, and forsake wrath : fret not thyself in any wise to do evil.*” “Cease from anger, and let go wrath ; leave anger, it leads only to evil doing.”—*Delitzsch*. The meaning is too obvious for remark. Malign passions are to be avoided ; they are evil in themselves, and they lead to evil. Wrong in essence and wrong in issues.

Ver. 9.—“*For evil-doers shall be cut off.*” They will not only leave the world soon, but they will leave it reluctantly. Contrary to their will, they will be cut off. The godly are led out of the world, the wicked are driven. Bloody and deceitful men shall not live out half their days. “*But those that wait upon the Lord shall inherit the earth.*” Godliness not only tends to longevity, but invests the soul with an imperishable interest in the earth.

Ver. 10.—“*For yet a little while, and the wicked shall not be ; yea, thou shalt diligently consider his place, and it shall not be.*” A repetition this of the preceding idea : the wicked, whom you envy, will soon be driven from the earth—he will be no more : and “if thou observest his place he is gone.”

Ver. 11.—“*But the meek shall inherit the earth ; and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace.*” The truly good have not only a permanent interest in life, but soul-satisfaction—“abundance of peace,” tranquillity of conscience, and harmony of soul.

Ver. 12.—“*The wicked plotteth against the just, and gnasheth upon him with his teeth.*” The life of the truly godly is a censure on the conduct of the wicked that so irritates and enrages them, that they plot against the good and devise their ruin.

Ver. 13.—“*The Lord shall laugh at him ; for he seeth that his day is coming.*” The Eternal, who foresees the destinies of the wicked, laughs at their conduct. Strong figure this to express divine contempt !

Ver. 14.—“*The wicked have drawn out the sword, and have bent their bow, to cast down the poor and needy, and to slay such as be of upright conversation.*” The idea is,—they have made full preparation to injure the righteous. The sword is unsheathed, the arrow quivers on the bended bow.

Ver. 15.—“*Their sword shall enter into their own heart, and their bows shall be broken.*” The idea of these words is,—their intended injury shall rebound on their own heads ; their purposes shall recoil on themselves ; the evil they intended to the good shall return on their own “hearts.”

ARGUMENT.—See Vol. XXXII., page 267.

HOMILETICS. In these verses and the succeeding, the au-

thor of this psalm points to a number of facts illustrative of the folly of a good man envying the wicked his prosperity. Some of these facts he repeats over and over again, with a little change of garb and sometimes relation. In these verses there are three facts showing the folly of fretful envy when directed towards the wicked.

I. THE PASSION RANKLING IN THE HEART HAS AN EVIL TENDENCY. (1) *It inflicts an injury on the soul of its possessor.* Malign passions are to the soul what the legions of locusts are to the vegetation of the East—they eat up the life. Aye, worse than locusts, they are fiends, kindling fires that burn down to the very centre of being, and reduce to ashes the better parts of human nature. The man who cherishes anger towards another does more mischief to himself than any enemy could inflict upon him. He who hates me can have his revenge much better by kindling wrath within me than by rifling me of all my worldly possessions or inflicting on my person the greatest tortures. The flames in which damned spirits writhe are the flames of their own malign passions. (2) *It stimulates to the infliction of injury upon others.* “Anger stirreth up strife.” Men, under the influence of anger, are ever disposed to mischief; their tongues deal out slander, their hands are lifted in battle, and their feet are “swift to shed blood.” Cease, then, “from anger, and forsake wrath.” It is a foolish passion, fraught with mischief to self and others.

“ Full many mischiefs follow cruel wrath,—
Abhorred bloodshed, and tumultuous strife,
Unmanly murder, and unthrifty wrath,
Bitter despite, with rancour's rusty knife,
And fretting grief, the enemy of life:
All these and many evils more, haunt ire.”

Edmund Spenser.

II. THE CONNECTION OF THE WICKED WITH THE EARTH IS NOT ENVIABLE. (1) *It is exposed to a violent termination.* “Evil-doors shall be cut off.” It is said the “wicked shall be driven away in his wickedness.” He does not leave the world with a free will. All his sympathies, interests, hopes,

are rooted in the earth, and he will hold on to the last with the energy of desperation; still he must go. "The wicked shall not be; yea, thou shalt diligently consider his place, and it shall not be." He has his place now in mercantile transactions, in military achievements, in parliamentary debates, in spheres of handicraft, and in scenes of revelry and debauch. But a day or two hence you will look for him in his place, but he is gone—driven away, never, never to return to it again. Why envy such a man his worldly possessions? How transient his interest in them; how soon he is sent from them to return no more! Unlike the "meek" or the godly who "inherit the earth" by cherishing in memory for ever the truths it has conveyed, the blessings it has imparted, the impressions which its grandeur and beauty have made. Their connection with it was purely material and therefore perishing. (2) It is *utterly unsatisfying*. This is implied by the statement that the meek "shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace." What tranquillity have the ungodly? "There is no peace, saith my God, for the wicked." The soul, apart from God, is like the dove that Noah despatched from the ark, it flutters and hovers over the tumultuous waters, and finds no place on which to rest its foot. Instead of having "abundance of peace," it has an ever-surging sea of distress, of regrets, anxieties, and forebodings.

III. THEIR OPPOSITION BRINGS ON THEM TERRIBLE MISERY. The seed of the serpent has from the beginning had a venomous animosity to the good. This animosity is here represented (1) As *cunning*, it "plotteth against the just;" it is fertile in schemes of ruin. (2) As *raging*. It "gnasheth upon him." Like the hidden fire of the volcano, it reveals itself by terrible vibrations. (3) As *practical*. "The wicked have drawn out the sword, and have bent their bow." Plan and passion will not satisfy it, it must work, and work with more implements than one—"sword and bow." In how many ways the wicked labour to beat down the ideas, thwart the plans, and wound the feelings of the righteous!

But all this opposition only brings ruin on themselves.

The ruin (1) involves the *contempt of Jehorah*. "The Lord shall laugh at him." Who would not sooner have an enemy's severest blow than his laugh? Can the boldest imagination create a figure to give a more terrible representation of misery than this,—the "laugh" of the Infinite? Sooner let Him hurl His thunders at me, and rain down His fires on my spirit than laugh at me. "He shall laugh at their calamities." The ruin (2) involves the *recoil of their own purposes*. "Their sword shall enter into their own heart, and their bows shall be broken." "A remarkable instance of the kind may be found in Esther (chap. v.—vii.) in the case of Haman. Indeed, such things are not uncommon in the world, where the cunning and the crafty are involved in the consequences of their own plans, and are taken in meshes from which they cannot free themselves. A straightforward course is easy, and men are safe in it; but it requires more skill than most men are endowed with to manage a crooked and crafty policy safely, or so as to be safe themselves in pursuing such a course. A spider will weave a web for flies with no danger to himself, for he is *made* for that, and acts as if he understood all the intricacies of his own web, and may move safely over it in every direction; but man was made to accomplish his purposes in an open and upright way, not by fraud and deceit; hence, when he undertakes a tortuous and crooked course—a plan of secret and scheming policy—in order to ruin others, it often becomes unmanageable by his own skill, or is suddenly sprung upon himself." The injury which the ungodly purposes to inflict on others, by a law of the moral universe always rebounds; the unsheathed sword by a moral magic turns its point back to the heart of the man who lifts it to strike another, and the arrow rebounds and pierces with new venom on its point. How often in life do we find men hanging on the gallows they have prepared for others, and poisoning themselves with the cup they had mixed for others.

CONCLUSION. How foolish, then, to envy the wicked! Take them in their best estate, and, instead of warranting one particle of envy on your part, they call for your honest censure and deep compassion.

Homiletic Sketches on the Book of Job.

The Book of Job is one of the grandest sections of Divine Scripture. It has never yet, to our knowledge, been treated in a purely Homiletic method for Homiletic ends. Besides many learned expositions on the book found in our general commentaries, we have special exegetical volumes of good scholarly and critical worth; such as Dra. Barnes, Wemyss, Mason Goode, Noyes Lee, Delitzsch, and Herman Hedwick Bernard: the last is in every way a masterly production. For us, therefore, to go into philology and verbal criticism, when such admirable works are available to all students, would be superfluous, if not presumption. Ambiguous terms, when they occur, we shall of course explain, and occasionally suggest an improved rendering: but our work will be chiefly, if not entirely, Homiletic. We shall essay to bring out from the grand old words those Divine verities which are true and vital to man as man in all lands and ages. These truths we shall frame in an order as philosophic and suggestive as our best powers will enable us to do; and this in order to help the earnest preachers of God's Holy Word.

Subject: Zophar's First Speech to Job. (3) The Life of the Godly and the Doom of the Wicked.

“If thou prepare thine heart,
And stretch out thine hands toward him;
If iniquity be in thine hand, put it far away,
And let not wickedness dwell in thy tabernacles.
For then shalt thou lift up thy face without spot;
Yea, thou shalt be stedfast, and shalt not fear:
Because thou shalt forget thy misery,
And remember it as waters that pass away;
And thine age shall be clearer than the noon-day;
Thou shalt shine forth, thou shalt be as the morning.
And thou shalt be secure, because there is hope;
Yea, thou shalt dig about thee, and thou shalt take thy rest in safety.
Also thou shalt lie down, and none shall make thee afraid;
Yea, many shall make suit unto thee.
But the eyes of the wicked shall fail,
And they shall not escape,
And their hope shall be as the giving up of the ghost.”—Job xi. 13—20.

EXOGETICAL REMARKS.—*Ver. 13.*—“*If thou prepare thine heart, and stretch out thine hands toward him.*” “If thou commune with thyself, tune thine heart to repentance, and then stretch out thine hand in

prayer." To "stretch out the hands" denotes the act of supplication. (See 1 Tim. ii. 9.)

Ver. 14.—"*If iniquity be in thine hand put it far away, and let not wickedness dwell in thy tabernacles.*" The general idea is,—abandon every sin, if it be in the hand throw it away, if it be in the dwelling clear every vestige of it away.

Ver. 15.—"*For then shalt thou lift up thy face without spot; yea, thou shalt be stedfast, and shall not fear.*" "Then surely thou shalt lift up thy countenance without spot and shalt be steadfast without fear." — *Dr. Bernard.* No longer shalt thou appear like a culprit with a saddened countenance and a drooping head, but thou shalt lift up thy face with a cheerful expression and a courageous port. The reference is here to the patriarch's appearance, dejected, sad, and wan. Great sorrow reveals itself in the body.

Ver. 16.—"*Because thou shalt forget thy misery, and remember it as waters that pass away.*" "In the preceding verse, Zophar had assured his unfortunate friend he would lose all fear of fresh calamities; in the present one, he explains why he is so confident that this will be the case; it is because his friend will utterly forget his former miseries. As long as men continue to bear in mind sufferings they have had to undergo, they are apt to give way to a groundless dread of an impending renewal of them; but when they can once bring themselves to banish them altogether from their thoughts, they are freed from such ominous forebodings, and this Job is told will be his case. If a recollection of thy former sufferings should at any time rise up in thy mind, thou wilt be in no apprehension, but feel assured they can as little return as waters which have once passed by."

Ver. 17.—"*And thine age shall be clearer than the noon-day; thou shalt shine forth, thou shalt be as the morning.*" The idea is that the remainder of his life would be as bright as the sun if he would only return to God. He would break forth as the sun which had been wrapped in clouds through many a day.

Ver. 18.—"*And thou shalt be secure, because there is hope; yea, thou shalt dig about thee, and thou shalt take thy rest in safety.*" The last clause has been variously rendered. "Now thou art in darkness, but thou shalt be as the morning."—*Barnes.* "Now thou art ashamed, but then thou shalt dwell in quiet."—*Gesenius.* "And when thou hast looked about thee thou wilt lie down in security."—*Dr. Bernard.* "Wherever thou lookest about thee, in safety shalt thou lie down."—*Elms.* The idea is, that he would feel himself secure in every direction.

Ver. 20.—"*But the eyes of the wicked shall fail, and they shall not escape, and their hope shall be as the giving up of the ghost.*" The eyes of the wicked shall be wearied out in the search for relief from the

miseries of life. They shall not escape, or as the margin has it, "flight shall perish from them." Their deliverance is out of the question; their hope shall be as the giving up of the ghost, or, as the margin has it, as "a puff of breath"—a mere exhalation.

HOMILETICS. Here we have two subjects of thought,—the life of the godly and the doom of the wicked.

I. THE LIFE OF THE GODLY. These words of Zophar suggest to us the nature and blessedness of a godly life.

First: The *nature* of a godly life. Here are two leading facts essentially connected with a godly life:—

(1) *The seeking for God.* If thou "prepare thine heart and stretch out thine hands towards him" (a) there must be the preparation of the heart. The heart in Scripture stands for the whole man, including the rational and moral parts. Man's great work is with his *heart*. It is a soil crusted by sin, covered with weeds, thorns, and thistles; its fallow ground must be broken up, its noxious productions uprooted, the incorruptible seed must be sown. It is a temple, but it is defiled by depravity and infested with demons. The fiends must be exorcised, and its precincts must be cleansed. It is a harp whose every string was made to vibrate with the praise of Jehovah, but it is unstrung and incapable of true moral music. "Prepare thine heart." Here is work for man! (b) There must be application to Heaven. "And stretch out thine hands towards him." "Let my prayer be set forth as incense, and the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice." The attitude expresses the very essence of religion, conscious dependence upon the eternal Father. The life of godliness is a life of prayer.

(2) *The abandonment of evil.* "If iniquity be in thine hand, put it far away." The grand work of the godly man is the work that Christ came to accomplish, to "put away sin."

Secondly: The *blessedness* of a godly life. What follows this godly life? (1) Cheerfulness of aspect. "Thou shalt lift up thy face without spot." The face is the soul's dial-plate: it notifies all the revolutions of the heart. Thoughts chisel their likeness on the brow, passions paint their hue

upon the cheek. True godliness gives man a sunny face. (2) Steadfastness of mind. "Yea, thou shalt be steadfast." Instability is not only weakness but misery; mental distraction is feebleness and woe. Godliness brings firmness, it gives the soul a firm rooting in truth, and makes it as calm amidst the billows of life as the rock that breaks in pieces its surging assailants. (3) Fearlessness of soul. "And shalt not fear." Godliness is love, and "perfect love casteth out fear." Moses on the margin of the Red Sea, the three Hebrew youths entering the fiery furnace, Peter addressing the Sanhedrim, Paul standing before Agrippa, are a few of the sublimest instances of moral heroism on record. (4) Deliverance from all suffering. "Thou shalt forget thy misery and remember it as waters that pass away." The godly man's suffering will be one day only a thing of memory. Have you ever seen a river rolling backward, and retracing its march? Never! And never will the sorrows of a good man return; they are gone for ever. Flow on, then, thou stream of life, and bear away our trials! Thou wilt get clearer, deeper, and calmer, as thou nearest the blue, broad, boundless sea of eternity. It will be pleasant to remember them when they are gone; it will inspire us with the grateful and the devout. (5) Sunliness of being. "Thine age shall be clearer than the noon-day." Unto the upright there ariseth light in darkness. The righteous shall shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of the Father.

II. THE DOOM OF THE WICKED. "But the eyes of the wicked shall fail, and they shall not escape, and their hope shall be as the giving up of the ghost." (1) Here is the loss of energy. "The eyes of the wicked shall fail." The soul's eyes gone, and the spiritual universe is midnight. (2) Here is the loss of safety. "They shall not escape." All efforts directed to safety utterly fruitless. (3) Here is the loss of hope. "Their hope shall be as the giving up of the ghost." The idea is that the loss of hope is like death, the separation of the soul from the body. What the soul is to the body, the dominant hope is to the soul, the inspirer

of its energies and the spring of its being. The loss of the dominant hope is like death in two respects. (a) In respect to its painfulness. How painful is death! it is the disruption of the mystic ties that connect the soul with the body, and the body with the loves, the pleasures, the beauties of the universe around it. Human nature recoils from it. But the pain of losing the dominant hope is in some respects greater than this. The loss of the dominant hope is like death, (b) in respect to its ruinousness. As the exit of the soul from the body ruins the body, the exit of hope from the soul ruins the soul. When hope takes her exit from the soul all beauty departs, all pleasures end, all usefulness is gone. A mind under despair is hideous, wretched, worthless.*

Sermonic Glances at the Gospel of St. John.

As our purpose in the treatment of this Gospel is purely the development, in the briefest and most suggestive form, of Sermonic outlines, we must refer our readers to the following works for all critical inquiries into the author and authorship of the book, and also for any minute criticisms on difficult clauses. The works we shall especially consult are:—"Introduction to New Testament," by Bleek; "Commentary on John," by Tholuck; "Commentary on John," by Hengstenberg; "Introduction to the Study of the Gospels," by Westcott; "The Gospel History," by Ebrard; "Our Lord's Divinity," by Liddon; "St. John's Gospel," by Oosterzee; "Doctrine of the Person of Christ," by Dornor; Lange; &c., &c.

Subject: Religious Bigotry and Divine Philanthropy.

"The Jews therefore said unto him that was cured, It is the sabbath-day; it is not lawful for thee to carry thy bed. He answered them, He that made me whole, the same said unto me, Take up thy bed, and walk. Then asked they him, What man is that which said unto thee, Take up thy bed, and walk! And he that was healed wist not who it was: for

* For additional thoughts on this passage see "Homilist," Series II., Vol. III., p. 574. Also Series III., Vol. X., p. 159.

Jesus had conveyed himself away, a multitude being in that place."—John v. 10—13.

EXPOSITION. *Ver. 10.*—"The Jews therefore said unto him that was cured, *It is the sabbath-day; it is not lawful for thee to carry thy bed.*" "For 'carry thy bed' read 'take up thy bed.' In such cases the matter goes quickly through fanatics, informers, and subordinates to the chiefs. Here the hierarchical chiefs already seem to speak; according to Meyer and Tholuck, the Sanhedrists. Yet it is possible that the matter only gradually reached them. At first they attack only the man himself for his carrying, which was the most palpable."—*Leage*. "Not lawful." It was against the Jewish law to carry burdens on the Sabbath, Nehemiah xiii. 15—19; Jeremiah xvii. 21; Exod. xxxi. 13—17; Numbers xv. 2—15.

Ver. 11.—"He answered them, *He that made me whole, the same said unto me, Take up thy bed, and walk.*" His answer implies that the Being Who had the power to heal him had the authority to command him. He felt that the Divinity that had cured him was superior to all ceremonial institutions.

Ver. 12.—"Then asked they him, *What man is that which said unto thee, Take up thy bed, and walk?*" Omit "thy bed." "What man?" Who is the man? The language seems to breathe a contemptuous spirit.

Ver. 13.—"And he that was healed wist not who it was, for Jesus had conveyed Himself away, a multitude being in that place." Alford renders the last clause, "Jesus escaped his notice, a multitude being in the place." The idea is,—He slipped quietly out of the crowd that had gathered about Him.

HOMILETICS. In these verses we have a specimen of two things—religious bigotry and divine philanthropy. We have here—

I. RELIGIOUS BIGOTRY. This is illustrated in the conduct of these Jews in relation to this cured man. Religious bigotry is—

First: Always *punctilious*. It lives in words and rituals, it sacrifices the spirit to the letter. It is very true that there was a law prohibiting the carrying of burdens on the Sabbath, but the spirit of the Sabbatic institution was that of universal benevolence. Christ taught that true Sabbath-keeping was well-doing. He who neglects a work of mercy on the Sabbath violates that holy day. The bigot is always quoting

ds, defending creeds, and observing rites. Religious
stry is—

secondly: Always *heartless*. Instead of rejoicing at seeing
poor man who had been thirty-eight years a cripple, able
walk and to carry his pallet, they seemed to exult that
y had caught a transgressor of their law. Bigotry eats
the humanity of men: nothing is more cruel: not only has
rtured in all ages the best of men, but it transfixed the
of man Himself to a cross. "We have a law, and by
law He is to die." Religious bigotry is—

thirdly: Always *inquisitorial*. "What man is that
ch said unto thee, Take up thy bed, and walk?" They
not ask, Who *healed* thee?—they had not sufficient
anity for that—but, Who bade thee take thy bed? We
it to find the lawless profaner out in order to punish him
rding to our law. Bigotry always prys into the concerns of
rs; it built and sustained for ages the infernal Inquisition.

"The bigot theologian—in minute
Distinctions skilled, and doctrines unreduced
To practice; in debate how loud! how long!
How dexterous! in Christian love how cold!
His vain conceits were orthodox alone.
The immutable and heavenly truth revealed
By God, was nought to him: he had an art,
A kind of hellish charm, that made the lips
Of truth speak falsehood: to his liking turned
The meaning of the text: made trifles seem
The marrow of salvation: to a word,
A name, a sect, that sounded in the ear
And to the eye so many letters showed,
But did no more—gave value infinite:
Proved still his reasoning best, and his belief
Though propped on fancies, wild as madmen's dreams.
Most rational, most scriptural, most sound:
With mortal heresy denouncing all
Who in his arguments could see no force."

Robert Pollok.

have here—

[DIVINE PHILANTHROPY. Here in the work of Christ we
a glorious specimen of Divine philanthropy.

secondary. It is *unrestricted*
or ceremony. All days and
above all law, it is always
thing called philanthropy on
bound by rules, and operate
sations: this is not the Divine
free as the air, and all-encomp

Thirdly: It is *commanding*.
same said unto me, Take up
obeyed, though he knew not V
love that restored him became
power has such a commanding
of love. This man knew as he
day with his bed on his back tl
judice of the people around hi
and made him invincible. "T
us."

Fourthly: It is *unpretending*.
away, a multitude being in tha
Him at this time. The knowl
probability have evoked their

Germs of Thought.

SERMONIC NOTES ON THE VISIONS OF EZEKIEL. No. IX.

Subject: A Vision of Divine Judgment.

“Moreover, the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Son of man, set thy face toward the south.”—Ezekiel xx. 45; xxi. 32.

THOUGH the style in which this vision is recorded is so abrupt and enigmatical that critics have considered this one of the most obscurely rendered passages of the entire book of Ezekiel, we nevertheless need not find it difficult to discover what, as a whole, is its local and temporary, and what its universal and eternal teaching.

Looking first at its primary application, we find that, in fulfilment of one grand function of the prophetic office, Ezekiel is commissioned to bring the mind and conscience of the terribly depraved Jewish people under the power of the future. That future will express the judgments of God. By judgments we are to understand the opinions of God, uttered not so much in words as in events; and those events would seem a natural part of human history. Such events in such a future would make clear the verdict of eternal righteousness and infinite goodness upon the defilement, and cruelties, and profanities of the people. There is an energy of Divine emotion, as though the very hands of God smote together in earnestness. The prophet, also, is in an agony of earnestness, as he seeks to let the people understand the Divine thought and feeling about them. In his endeavour he labours to bring all their history under the power of the future. For this, five distinct historic periods are rehearsed in order: the first, when the Lord came to visit the children of Israel in Egypt; the second,

when they were brought into the wilderness ; the third, when, near the close of their sojourn there, a new generation had come into being ; a fourth, when they were settled in the land of Canaan ; and the last, the period comprehending the generation now addressed by the prophet. There is to be an inquest on these five periods. Because of the crimes therein exposed, there looms over the nation a future full of evil omen. In striking figures the vision discloses more clearly and more terribly than the people had yet been told the approaching invasion and conquest of Judæa by the Chaldean forces—forces symbolised by vehement flame and ruthless sword. Under these retributive forces all would come. The forest of human life, whether young or old, evil or good, would suffer in this fire. The king would be led a helpless captive to Babylon, and so, though not slain, would very literally come under the power of this sword. All the distinction that peculiarly belonged to them as a people would be subverted. There would be no regal or priestly glory left—none to govern man, none to intercede with God. Yet the proclamation of God's dealings has goodness mingled with the severity. For the prostration and ruin will be only for a time. There will be a gradation and a long continuance in the processes of revolution and ruin, but through them all God will be preparing and disciplining the people. The time of trouble is a "trial" time, and in the trial varnish and glitter will disappear, the unreal will give way to the real. Such trial time will go on till He comes who is the right owner of power and glory, and who will transform all that was only material, and therefore shadow, into the spiritual, and therefore substantial and abiding glory. The true priestly dignity, and the true royal splendours, will have not so much their restoration as their adequate and permanent realisation in the Messiah. Great is the contrast between the destiny of Judah and that of Ammon. Though at one crisis it seemed uncertain which of the two the Chaldean forces would first assail, and though both suffered alike under their scathing and crushing invasion, yet the final destiny of the two stands

in prophetic vision, as in historic record, in stern and sharp contrast. For through the awful process of deep humiliation and indescribable misery Judah reached the consummation of its glory. "But for Ammon, because of its scornful spirit, there is no such perspective of future recovery; it perishes without hope. To the Ammonites as a people this was only the beginning of troubles, for they never attained again to political power and importance: they gradually dwindled away, till their separate existence ceased, and their place was no more known."

All this at first in vision, and more fully in the history that is the best commentary of prophecy, clearly teaches *such universal and eternal lessons* as—

I. DIVINE JUDGMENT IS A TERRIFIC FACT. God has His ideas about conduct; has a care about His moral universe. His ideas, when uttered in what we solemnly call judgments, are appropriately uttered. There is the fitting tone; the appropriate emphasis. For sins against light, and privilege and grace, the fitting tone, the appropriate emphasis of the Divine idea, may often be fire and sword. Human thoughts are often so unimportant that they are not expressed in words. Human thoughts that are convictions are uttered even by uncultured lips with an eloquence that proves them to be real; but perhaps the profoundest human thoughts are those that come out in deeds, and live and pulsate long after winged words have vanished in the air. God's thoughts about character have not only had an utterance—an utterance in words that are unmatched in language, but also, because these thoughts possess Him, because this care about goodness is the very breath of His being, they have been uttered in deeds. The flood in Noah's time, the fire on the cities of the plain, the destruction of Jerusalem, the death of the Saviour, the ghastly mysteries of hell, all (as do ten thousand events in what is called profane history) utter God's judgments on evil.

II. DIVINE JUDGMENT WROUGHT BY HUMAN AGENCY. The Chaldean armies unconsciously uttered the thought of the

earner visions, we note again
fire were the very sword and

III. DIVINE JUDGMENTS M.

What more natural than t
nation should take advantag
party strife, degraded life, and
and should come and invad
history as the Jews had had
his narration of the five epoch
internal disorganisation, and
the besiegers. And let a man
the seven ages Shakespeare de
tant of the sins of each age in
The sinner finds, as has been
abusing the body he brings a
soul. "All things that God
human body, the laws of the h
the laws of all heaven and ea
for thou hast arrayed thyself a

IV. DIVINE JUDGMENT IS VI FLUENCE.

evident that Ezekiel teaches that the sins of the nation involve in suffering all the people. This principle can be proved (1) *historically*, (2) *philosophically*, (3) *morally*. It is in accordance with historic facts, philosophic theory, and moral rectitude, that man should bring blessing or evil upon his fellow man. This fact, first, *illustrates the extent of human influence*; second, *suggests the accountability of man to man for his moral conduct*.

V. DIVINE JUDGMENT BENEVOLENT IN ITS PURPOSES.

Here we are taught (1) *That the revolutions of life are under Divine control*. It is God who overturns. (2) *That the result of these revolutions will be the victory of righteousness*. The issue of successive overturnings will be the enthroning of the Rightful King. This is true in individual as well as in natural life. All the processes of repentance and doubt, of spiritual and of mental struggle, are designed by God to lead not to perpetual anarchy and revolt, but the rest and peace of submission to Christ. What St. Augustine taught may really be taken as the cry of the race and of the individual. "Thou hast made me for Thyself: my heart is restless, and cannot find rest, till it rests in Thee."

Bristol.

URIJAH R. THOMAS.

Subject: Godliness.

"Exercise thyself unto godliness." "Godliness is profitable unto all things." "Godliness with contentment is great gain."—1 Tim. iv. 7, 8; vi. 6.

THESE short passages teem with apostolic instruction, useful, necessary, of universal bearing, and worthy of all acceptance. The young evangelist is advised to exercise himself *rather* unto godliness than give heed to fables and endless genealogies which only start questions—at the best a worthless, contemptible pursuit, worthy to be entered upon only by old women who want something better to do. And this profane study being incompatible with godliness, it should be abandoned altogether.

...the great principle, *pure sincere*
and the right end, *God's glory*.
added up, the sum will be godli-
godliness, is *knowledge*; so know
mother of godliness." The old
Godliness is *godlikeness, resemble*
acquired. But how is it possible
nothing is known? "This is
know thee, the only true God, and
has sent." There can be no god
God and unfeigned love towards
treasure of the heart that whis-
forth.

II. THE PRACTICE. Religion is
Godliness must be *exercised*, and
self, for religion is a *personal* in-
exercise unto godliness, are here
not to take an *ascetic* course, retir-
fasting out his life in seclusion.
than godliness in that. But he
ously unto godliness.

practice; you know the way, you know the commandments; but we think it meet to stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance. This is the minister's work—you know the commandments, happy are ye if ye do them, and so exercise yourselves unto godliness." To attain to godliness exercise is indispensable, as indispensable as means are to an end. Feats are not accomplished without arduous and assiduous exercise. To grow in grace, and add cubits to spiritual stature, exercise is essentially necessary. Practice is the given condition to reason. Not so with instinct; it grows apace and soon reaches perfection without long experience. The bee fabricates its cell, and the bird builds its nest and discovers no improvements in architecture. But man lives and learns. Hence the propriety of *exercising*. Let a man habituate himself unto godliness; soon it will become second nature to him, and he will find it easier to live godly than otherwise.

III. THE PROFIT. Here, again, the profits of the two exercises are very happily contrasted. They differ both in kind and degree. Bodily exercise profiteth *little*, only for a *little time*. The stout and gallant youths of Greece had to strive hard for their little prize, and after all only one could win it. After coming into the goal victorious there would await the victor a garland of laurel with which his brow was to be decked, amid the deafening clamours of the thousand spectators. But he is no sooner crowned than the leaves begin to fall off, all his honours fade away, and his brow is left unadorned. "They do it to obtain a corruptible crown," but they who exercise themselves unto godliness will appear on the resurrection morn and the judgment day with crowns incorruptible on their heads and palms evergreen in their hands. Godliness is a decided gain, though the godly may often *appear* to suffer loss in this life. But granting him to be a loser in this world he has another to look on to, where he will receive more than compensation for all losses he may have sustained. He can afford both to labour and suffer reproach, because he trusts in the living God—he has promises great and precious to rely on.

... pieces the tender
and places, risk their health
And after all, "What is a man
whole world and lose his own
gain is loss—loss irretrievable
should men labour in vain
nought? Godliness is the one
thereof is better than fine goods
This sums up all its advantages
circumstances, in prosperity and in
bitterness, make darkness into
combs, and convert death into
first the kingdom of God and
things shall be added unto you."

Portsea.

Subject : The

"And there I will meet with thee,
above the mercy-seat, from between the
ark of the testimony, of all things which
unto the children of men."

to abuse. (5) The omniscience and benevolence of the great Governor of the world.

The passage read was typical of something to come. In Heb. ix. Paul shows that these refer to Christ; the mercy-seat is called the propitiatory. The same Greek word (*ἱλαστήριον*) is used by Paul and John to refer to the atonement of Christ: there—in the atonement)—“will I meet with thee.”

I. In the “mercy-seat,” or in Christ, we meet the LAW of God.

Jesus does not alter the law at all; the atonement cannot make what is true to be untrue, or the reverse. The atonement cannot make God more or less merciful than He is; it leaves all in God as it originally stood.


1. Christ gives a *new view* of law. Mankind were in a state of rebellion against law; if they were to be restored to allegiance, the law must be explained to them. The ungodly man believes not in his heart that the law is good. Jesus, by His doctrine, example, and atonement, has effectually eradicated the enmity from many minds, and will from many more.

2. Christ introduces a *new relation* in reference to law. Did the atonement of Christ free man from law? No. What then? It worked so that men should be for a time in a state of sin, and not in a state of punishment. As the mercy-seat was between the law in the ark and sinners, so Christ, the true propitiatory, is between the law and sinners.

3. Christ creates in His people an *affection* for the law. James says, “The law is good.”

II. In the “mercy-seat” or in Christ we meet the MERCY of God. Mercy is a sweet idea; the sweetest that man can receive; the sweetest that angels can entertain; the sweetest that Deity can originate. What is mercy? It is the modification or exercise of goodness towards the unworthy and miserable.

1. The atonement of Christ is the *medium* for the *exercise* of mercy. Mercy must have a proper channel to act on man,



of God. There was a vision
the Shekinah : it was a light
Israel through all their
ark, as an evidence of
God. Likewise, the fulness
Christ.

1. This may be applied
is not the time to prove
Deity was united in His
we consider the divine app
attributes referred to Him, &

2. Christ in the Scriptures
moral attributes of God. Th
have you ever seen it as
human being, but it was
God, &c.

IV. In the "mercy-seat," c
of God. Over the mercy-seat
cherubim; these were figures
The Bible expressly declare
are brought into associati

The Preacher's Scrap Room.

SHORT ESSAYS.

ON PREACHING.

IT is a moot question, notwithstanding that the subject has been continually discussed, what is the most effective mode of preaching a sermon; entirely from memory, entirely from MS., or, as far as the phraseology is concerned, extemporaneously. Of the three, the two latter methods seem to be the only practicable ones. I now propose to consider the relative advantages of each.

In favour of the use of a form may be urged—Firstly : The preacher, by means of it, is able to express himself with more accuracy. It is impossible for even the most fluent extempore speaker, though he may have thought out his subject with great clearness, invariably to select at once the very word that he needs; but he has to select some word or other, which, if not always the right one, must therefore sometimes be the wrong one. A wrong word may convey a wrong meaning. Hence it is that we find parliamentary and other public orators so continually taking exception to the shorthand writer's report of their speeches. They see that their language, as reported, conveys a very different meaning from that which it was their intention to convey; and therefore they suppose, honestly enough, that they never could have used the words attributed to them. But in most such cases the reporter is correct. Stenography, like photography, is sometimes a little too true to the original. For want of sufficient deliberation the speaker did employ language which he never would have used had his words been selected more at leisure.

Secondly : He can express himself with more grace. The extempore preacher not unfrequently adopts expressions which, were he to be reminded of them afterwards, he would be loth to acknowledge as having employed. He has to trust for fitting words to the doubtful feeling of the moment. A perturbed or beclouded mind, or illness of body, may render it impossible for even a ready and good speaker to express himself with the perspicuity and elegance which, did he read his discourse, he might command. In one place there will be ambiguity of

good. — — — — — without which he c

Against the use of a form may be u
tions :—

First : However great may be th
speaker has prepared his sermon, by
profit by an occasion which is partic
bringing it to a higher degree of perfe
of its delivery. When a preacher is t
his theme, as only he can be imbued v
pounding it, apposite and forcible wo
which would not occur to his mind in t
the study.

Secondly : His hearers, feeling that
preacher's eloquence are already deter
unacquainted with their limit, do not
that interest which they otherwise woul
of expectancy there comes a flagging of a

Thirdly : However energetic may be
sermon, the fact of its being read causes i
the consciences of the hearers. The reas
as follows : No matter with what ear
utterances be characterised, that earnest
as it could be were it spontaneous. Gr
at the time that his stirring appeal

than a read sermon. As a future study for the cogency of its reasoning, or the symmetry and beauty of its parts, the slowness of its growth doubtless results in a more perfect development of the whole. But, as a present means of rousing the spiritually dead—of prompting the thoughtless to reflect and the obdurate to feel—the extempore sermon seems to me to be the more potent of the two.

THORNTON WELLS.

The Chief Founders of the Chief Faiths.


Around no men, amongst all the millions of mankind, does so much interest gather as around the Founders of the Chief Religious Faiths of the world. Such men are sometimes almost lost in the obscurity of remote ages, or of the mystery with which they surrounded themselves, or their early followers invested them. But whenever they can be discerned, their characters analysed, and their deeper experiences understood, they are found to be not only leaders and masters of the multitudes who have adopted more or less of their creed and ritual, but also interpreters (more or less partial) of the universal yearnings of the soul of man. Such men may have seemed to sit at the fountains of human thought and feeling, and to have directed or have coloured the mysterious streams, but they have quite as often indicated in their doctrines and in their deeds the strong courses of the thoughts and feeling which are more permanent and deeper than any one man or even any one age could completely discover. The aim of these papers will be, with necessary brevity, to review the chief of such men, noting suggestively rather than exhaustively, their *biography*, their *circumstances*, their *theology*, and their *ethics*. And in concluding the series it is purposed to compare and to contrast each and all of them with the "One Man whom in the long roll of ages we can love without disappointment, and worship without idolatry, the Man Christ Jesus."

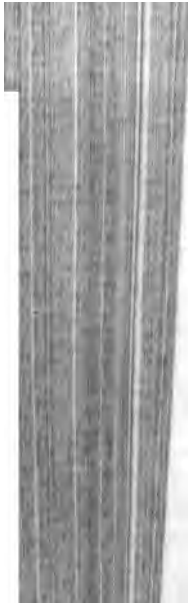
PRINCIPAL BOOKS OF REFERENCE.—Max Müller's "History of Ancient Sanskrit Literature," "The Science of Language," "Chips from a German Workshop;" Rev. F. D. Maurice's "Religions of the World;" Archdeacon Hardwick's "Christ and other Masters;" Rev. J. W. Gardner's "Faiths of the World;" Miss Mary Carpenter's "Last Days of Rammohun Roy;" Rev. F. W. Farrar's "Witness of History to Christ;" Rev. A. W. Williamson's "Journey in North China;" Canon Liddon's Bampton Lecture on "Our Lord's Divinity;" Cousin's "History of Modern Philosophy;" S. Clarke's "Ten Great Religions;" Father Hue's "Christianity in China."

No. III.

CONFUCIUS.

(Continued from Vol. XXXII., page 352.)

CIRCUMSTANCES such as we have noticed appear to have surrounded the great Chinese sage. Into such a condition of things he was born about the year 551 B.C. He was descended from a line of eminent statesmen and



courage was one of the indispe
leader and a Founder of a
was clearly the chief force tha
and that still lives as the ge
the opportunities provided for
liberal an education as the t
And in his very boyhood he ga
frequently to nightly study,
"The Kings," the five books
sacred scriptures of the early C
well while he was yet in his
he learned to realise the contra
what then was, and thus he bec
purpose of seeking to recover fo
he conceived they had lost. Un
become the mental and moral mas
for a season, devote himself to the
himself from human relationships
For when about nineteen years
one son, by his only wife. An

the Chinese princes among whom the country had been subdivided, to reform all abuses. In some cases he was allowed to try his experiments as a social and political reformer. But, as was needful for himself and for his cause, his endeavours at first were far from prosperous. Much scorn was heaped upon him. However, in the second period of his public life he won more successes. For at fifty years of age, being recalled from his travels to be a minister of state in his native country, he was able to put into action some of his theories of good government and to test their practicability. And the increasing prosperity of the people began to prove that his ideals of government had much virtue in them, and that he was not far wrong in asserting that the model on which to work a government was that of a father regulating and protecting a family. However, very soon his monarch proved himself a very unparental ruler, and tired of the austere virtues the great reformer had inculcated, he plunged into dissipation. So that Confucius threw up the position he held under him, and again began to travel: this time, as we have hinted, as a teacher. Distinguished by indomitable energy, he manifested during his retirement from official life the accuracy of his own saying, "The general of a large army may be defeated, but you cannot defeat the determined mind of a peasant." And the resolute persistency that would not let him refrain from work till he died was a beautiful commentary on another of his sayings, "If I am building a mountain, and stop before the last basketful of earth is placed on the summit, I have failed in my work. But if I have placed but one basketful on the plain, and go on, I am really building a mountain." One of his methods of pursuing his scheme for the reproduction of the ancient models of social and political life was to gather round him disciples. Now he no longer sought the ear of princes, but would appeal to the common people. The disciples he called round him, and who in his lifetime numbered perhaps three thousand, were to be missionaries to the masses of the nation. Out of these thousands of disciples, ten of the highest

men in pursuit of it ; at forty I
at fifty I understood the rule
everything I heard I clearly und
of my heart no longer transgress
Bristol.

The Preacher's

Subject : REST AWHILE.

"Rest awhile."—Mark vi. 31.

These are the words, not
of indolence, but incarnate
industry. No one ever ap-
peared on this earth more
diligent than Christ. He
would not waste an hour.
"I must work the works of
Him," &c. And yet here
He bids His disciples. who


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walk of life there is this hurry: the faculties of all seem on the stretch, men are out of breath, they pant with excitement, all is helter-skelter. They seem to eat their meals now as the Jews ate the Passover, with their loins girded, their shoes on their feet, their staff in hand ready to start. Let me address these words to men of different classes:—

I. "Rest awhile," men of PLEASURE. What a hurry you are in, in the pursuit of what you call pleasure! You rush hither and thither, to theatres, taverns, balls, tea-gardens, oratorios, exhibitions, race-courses, feasting at banquets, shooting pigeons, catching fish, and I know not what. In the midst of all this excitement we bid you pause. "Rest awhile." "Rest awhile," not as a loafer, but as a thinker. Think (1) that the pleasures you are pursuing are *unworthy* of your nature. Eating and drinking, hearing music and seeing sights, are all mere sensuous indulgences. All the pleasures you can derive from them are the mere titillation of the senses, they thrill no chord of the soul, they bear no swell of music into the inner heart. Think (2) that the pleasures you are pursuing *degrade* your nature. The Almighty Maker of your being never intended you to seek happiness in your

senses. Your animal appetites should be attended to as reliefs, not as gratifications. The more you minister to your senses the more you enfeeble the soul. Think (3) that the pleasures you are pursuing are *brief*er than your nature. Even here, should you live to old age, they will lose their power. That in which you now feel delight will be to you as an orange sucked dry, dry peel which you trample under foot. The choicest viands will pall on your lips, desire will fail, and the daughters of music shall be made low. But death inevitably terminates them. Think (4) that the pleasures you are pursuing are *unsatisfactory* to your nature. The happiness for which you are made cannot stream from without, it must well up from within. It does not come through the bodily organs, it works up from the well of pure loves, high hopes, and Divine aspirations. "The water that I shall give thee shall be in thee as a well of water." My pleasure-seeking brother, for God's sake "rest awhile," think of these things!

II. "Rest awhile," men of BUSINESS. Worldly men, in what a hurry you are. You are truly running a race for wealth. Your legs cannot bear you fast enough, the swiftest steed is too slow for you, even express trains appear



though your exhausted frame may need it, but for the sake of your soul! Think (1) that material wealth cannot make you *rich*. You may be a millionaire and yet a pauper. The most impoverished men I have known have had the most of this world's goods. Nothing can make you rich but that which ennobles your nature and procures for you a place in God's immortal paradise of virtue. Spiritual wealth—the wealth of Christly sentiments and aims—can alone enrich thee. Think (2) that material wealth cannot make you *happy*. I have read that in one of our English cathedrals there lie the remains of a rich man who had inscribed by his own wish on the stone, "*Miserribus*"—

with the multitude of scribblers! Authorship has become mercenary. Publishers are buying brains, and these brains work in furious haste. Book succeeds book as rapidly as wave follows wave. Men of letters, "rest awhile" and think. Get independent convictions—(1) of the *truth* of things before you write; and (2) of the obligation to *publish* your convictions before you write. Study deeply, honestly, inductively, devoutly, the three great books from which all books are drawn—material nature, the Holy Bible, and the immortal spirit within you.

CONCLUSION. Indeed, the words are applicable to all men. "Rest awhile." All need *reflection*, for it is only by translating things to thought, and reducing them to principles of action, that they become ours. All need *devotion*, calm communion with the Infinite Spirit. Come, brothers, come apart into a desert place and "rest awhile," to turn the past to account, rightly use the present, and arrange for the awful future. Souls can only really grow as the tree which rises to strength and majesty by hiding its roots in solitude and silence. The noblest building in Judea was the temple erected by Solomon on Moriah's sacred brow. But it was reared in silence; there was neither "hammer

or axe, nor any tool of iron heard while it was building." Even so with the noblest character, it requires calm, deep, devout silence for its erection.

Subject: PHILANTHROPIA
PIETY.

"Is it such a fast that I have chosen? A day for a man to afflict his soul? is it to bow down his head as a bulrush, and to spread sackcloth and ashes *under him*? Wilt thou call this a fast, and an acceptable day to the Lord? Is not this the fast that I have chosen, to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke? Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house? when thou seest the naked that thou cover him, and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh? Then shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thine health shall spring forth speedily, and thy righteousness shall go before thee; the glory of the Lord shall be thy reward. Then shalt thou call, and the Lord shall answer; thou shalt cry, and he shall say, Here I am."—Isaiah lviii. 5—9.

In these verses you have the religious instinct working, not through selfishness, but through *love*, not in formal religious devotions, but in earnest philanthropic services. This is evermore its right development; it is only thus that it becomes *genuine piety*. Three remarks are suggested concerning this genuine piety:—

support of priesthood.
Hence, too, the attention
constantly and everywhere
paid to forms of devotion
liturgies, hymns, music, and
various ceremonies. But to
suppose this is the only, or
even the chief way of develop-
ing the true religious feel-
ing, is a great mistake—a
mistake long standing, univer-
sal, and fraught with incal-
culable mischief. God is not
to be "worshipped as though
he needed anything." Of
what service are your long
prayers and psalmodic choirs
to Him? What, then, is the
true ritual? Let God Him-
self declare. "Is not this the
fast that I have chosen? To
loose the bands of wickedness,
to undo the heavy burdens
and let the oppressed go free,
and that ye break every

and healthful vigour will come into the soul. "Righteousness"—"thy righteousness shall go before thee." The eternal law of rectitude—not expediency, not caprice, not passion, not morbid sentiment, will guide the footsteps as a leader through the winding path of life." "Glory"—"the glory of the Lord shall be thy reward" (margin, "shall gather thee up, that ye shall bring up the rear"). All these are figures employed to symbolise the glorious influences of piety expressing itself in earnest philanthropic services. If all who in this land of ours crowd the churches and profess religion were to set to earnest, determined, persevering, self-denying, and devout effort, in order to remove the evil under which our race is groaning, what would be the effect? Then Christianity would appear in a new light to the world. It would no longer be a thing of creeds, and sentiments, and songs; it would be felt as the "arm of the Lord revealed." Men would believe in it, they would hail it as heaven's most beneficent messenger.

III. ITS SPIRIT IS ACCEPTABLE TO GOD. "Then shalt thou call and the Lord shall answer; thou shalt cry, and he shall say, Here I am."

The idea is, that if men would only be real in their religion, show their love to

Him by labouring earnestly for the good of suffering humanity, then He would respond to their prayers, and grant them their request. What are prayers without philanthropy? A string of hollow, impious words, abhorrent to the ears of Almighty love and truth. Men pray for the conversion of the world, but there is no answer; men pray for spiritual growth and comfort, but there is no answer. Why? Because their piety does not work strenuously, unremittingly, and devoutly, to redeem suffering humanity out of its distresses. Believe me, that *genuine piety is philanthropy*.

"It bids us seek the holes where
famine lurks,
Clutching the hoarded crust
with trembling fingers,
Where toil in damp, unwholesome
caverns works,
Or, with strained eyeball, o'er
the needle lingers.

"It bids us stand beside the dying
bed
Of those about to quit the
world for ever;
Smooth the toss'd pillow, prop
the aching head,
Cheer the heart-broken, whom
death hastes to sever.

"And those who copy thus Christ's
life on earth,
Feeding the poor, and comforting
the weeper,
Will all receive a meed of price-
less worth,
When ripely gathered by the
Heavenly Reaper."

variation which only deepens
the impression of its genuin-
ness. Mark only has the
exact words of our text. I
only records the word
"Why make ye this ado?"
Christ here refers to the
affected lamentations of pro-
fessional mourners who have
assembled, according to the
custom of the East, in the
house of death.† All the

* See "Homilist," Series II.
Vol. IV., page 611.

† "The expressions of grief at
the death of a friend in eastern
countries are extreme. As soon as
a person dies all the females in the
family set up a loud and doleful
cry. They continue it as long as
they can without taking breath,
and the shriek of wailing dies away
in a low sob. Nor do the relatives
satisfy themselves with these ex-
pressions of violent grief. They
hire persons of both sexes, whose
employment it is to mourn."


as, and assem-
and sob, and
imations. What
ut? How much
-sacrificing love
all? Like hired
the East certain
fessors have come
make a great
(3) Go to certain
rship. How loud
ons of sin, how
re the devotions
and sound, at-
tication. But
eality is there in

The religion of
as! has become
; conventional
has become cant.
are ALWAYS AB-
CHRIST. "Why
is ado?" Why
cal display of a
do not feel?
de your natures,
pose on society,
our God? Why
pocrisy? Christ
, the Reality, and
ons, shams, hy-
re to the last
ensive to His
le mingled with
and sinners, but
and spoke in
the hollow scribes
es. "Why make
?" Priests, doff
otal robes; preach-
n your rhetorical
churches, cease
ltuous professions
ce and worship.

Spirit, and they

that worship Him must wor-
ship Him in spirit and in
truth." Mock emotions are
abhorrent to Christ. Were
He to enter into the religious
gatherings of Christendom,
whether for worship or for
the advocacy of religious and
benevolent institutions in His
name, would He not, as He
heard the tumult and wit-
nessed the display, thunder
out the words, "Why make
ye this ado?" "Enter into
your closet and shut the
door," &c. "Do justly, love
mercy, walk humbly with
your God!"

III. They are EVER HIN-
DRANCES TO RESUSCITATION.
Matthew says it was only
when the people who made
the noise were put forth, or,
as Mark has it, "When He
had put them all out," that
He entered the room where
the damsel was lying, took
her by the hand, and raised
her to life. Deep and ever-
deepening is my impression
that the reviving work of
Christ is lamentably hin-
dered by the amount of mock
emotion in His churches. All
pretenders, all hollow pro-
fessors (and their name is
legion), whether cleric or
laic, will have to be "put
forth," to be dragged out, be-
fore He will do any great re-
vival work. Great God, if we
are false, we are keeping Christ
out of the house, where dead
souls lie to be quickened!
Let us search our hearts and



mon. Even the first father
survived his son. Parents
more frequently bury the
children than their children
them.

"The feeble everywhere wrap the
athletic in a shroud,
And weeping fathers build their
children's tomb."

But though common it does
not seem to us altogether nat-
ural. "We feel it natural,"
says Canon Melville, "that
children should close the eyes
and shroud the limbs of
fathers and mothers, but un-
natural that fathers and mo-
thers should perform these sad
duties for children." Ed-
mund Burke, in his famous
letter to the Duke of Bedford,
said: "I live in an inverted
order; they who ought to
have succeeded me have gone
before me: they —" gone

the ever-enduring Father. We infer from this fact—

II. THAT THE NATURAL OBJECTS OF HUMAN CONFIDENCE ARE NOT SUFFICIENT TO SUSTAIN US. How naturally do parents repose confidence in their children! They endeavour to give them such an intellectual, moral, secular, and social start as will not only enable them to go comfortably and honourably through life, but as will enable them to be a source of pleasure to their parents in their old age. They expect that they will be their staff, sustaining them under the weight of years, and that their society will relieve the gathering gloom, and their loving words nerve their courage when heart and flesh are failing. This confidence is natural. Where else on earth can the aged parent lean than on the breast of his loving child? Albeit, since children so often die before their parents, this is not a sufficient object for confidence; it is a broken reed. We are dependent creatures, and the instinct of reliance is strong within us. We must repose on some one, and the only one is He that is the "same yesterday, to-day, and for ever." We infer from this fact—

III. THAT CHILDREN SHOULD BE EDUCATED FOR THE SAKE OF THEIR NATURES RATHER THAN WITH A VIEW TO THEIR CALLING IN LIFE. As a rule,

parents educate their children not because of their spiritual faculties, moral relations, and imperishable interests, but because they wish to qualify them for certain avocations and positions in life. Hence when a young man dies just as he has completed his education—won the highest honours in the university, there is a feeling that all the expense connected with his education has been so much waste. Parents should educate their children not because they are citizens of earth, but because they are citizens of the universe; not to make them great merchants, artists, or statesmen, but to make them great men; not to fit them for the mere business of this life, but to qualify them for the high positions of eternity. What boots mere secular education? We are on earth only for a few days at most, we are to be elsewhere for ever. Our material relations are few, slight, and temporary; our moral relations are manifold, mighty, and eternal. We infer from this fact—

IV. THAT PREPARATION FOR ETERNITY IS AS URGENT FOR THE YOUNG AS FOR THE OLD. Since children so frequently die before their parents, why should the youngest calculate on a long life? The hope to reach old age seems as universal as the race, but it is a strange delusion. Though

most expect to attain the threescore years and ten, the vast majority that sleep in cemeteries fell before they reached one half that period. To all, therefore, the admonition applies, "Be ye therefore ready, for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh."

CONCLUSION. My young friend, do not build on years, neither be anxious for a lengthened terrestrial life. To live long is not to breathe through a whole century, but to think in concord, and to throb in sympathy with God and His holy universe.

"Virtue, not rolling suns, the mind matures :

That life is long which answers life's great end.

The time that bears no fruit deserves no name ;

The man of wisdom is the man of years.

In hoary youth, Methuselahs may die ;

Oh, how misdated on their flattering tombs." — *Young.*

Subject : HAZAEL : A REVEALER OF HUMAN NATURE

"And Hazael said, But what ! is thy servant a dog that he should do this great thing !" — 2 Kings viii. 13.

The history of Hazael is soon told. He was an officer in the court of Syria whom Elijah was commanded to anoint as successor to Benhadad, and at the same time to

anoint Jehu to be king of Israel. Several years afterwards, Benhadad, residing at Damascus and being taken sick, instructed Hazael to take a princely present to the prophet Elisha, and consult him as to the issue of his sickness. The prophet informed Hazael that his royal master's disease would not prove mortal, but still he would not live ; and he proceeded to predict the elevation of Hazael to the throne of Syria, and a series of the most horrible cruelties of which he would be guilty towards the children of Israel. Hazael expressed the utmost abhorrence of such conduct ; but the very next day he stifled Benhadad to death, took the throne, and in process of time perpetrated all the barbarities that the prophet had described. This piece of history suggests several thoughts concerning human nature.

I. **THE SENSE OF VIRTUE** in human nature. When the prophet with tears told Hazael the heartless cruelties he would perpetrate on the children of Israel—that he would set their strongholds on fire, slay the young men with the sword, and dash the children to pieces—he seemed to have such a sense of virtue within him that he was shocked at the monstrosity, and said, "What ! is thy servant a dog ?". We need not sup-

that he feigned this assent, but that it was and that it now produced a revulsion at the times he was told he would perpetrate. Every man has a sense of right within him; indeed, this sense is an essential element in our constitution, the moral substance of manhood, the core of our nature, our moral *ego*; it is what we call conscience.

THE EVIL POSSIBILITIES OF HUMAN NATURE. This man, who was shocked at the idea of perpetrating such enormities at first, actually enacted a few hours afterwards. The elements of the devil are in every man, though he may not know it. The vultures of evil are in all dead hearts; it only requires a little heat of the outward sphere to hatch them to life. Men have often professed courses of action; afterwards they have proceeded with alacrity and de-

The virtue of many is only vice sleeping. The evil elements of the human soul are like gunpowder, inert, until the spark of action falls on them. The greatest monsters in human history were at one time considered innocent and

"Many a man," says

a modern author, "could he have a glimpse in innocent youth of what he would be twenty or thirty years after, would pray in anguish that he might be taken in youth before coming to that." What is the moral of this? The necessity of a change of heart.

III. THE SELF-IGNORANCE OF HUMAN NATURE. How ignorant of himself and his heart was Hazael when he said, "Is thy servant a dog that he should do this great thing?" Men do not know what they are. Self-ignorance is (1) the most common of all ignorance; (2) the most culpable of all ignorance; (3) the most ruinous of all ignorance.

IV. THE RESILIENT VELOCITY OF HUMAN NATURE. To-day this man seemed in sympathy with the just and the good, to-morrow his whole nature is aflame with injustice and cruelty; to-day he soars up with the angels, to-morrow he revels with the torturing fiends. Souls can fall from virtue swiftly as the shooting stars. One hour they may blaze in the firmament, the next lie deep in the mud.

"Examine me, O Lord, and prove me: try my reins and my heart."

Seeds of Sermons from the Minor Prophets.

If the Bible as a whole is inspired, it is of vast importance that all its Divine Ideas should be brought to bear upon the living world of men. Though the pulpit is the organ Divinely intended for this work, it has been doing it hitherto in a miserably partial and restricted method. It selects isolated passages, and leaves whole chapters and books for the most part untouched. Its conduct to the Minor Prophets may be taken as a case in point. How seldom are they resorted to for texts, and yet they abound with splendid passages throbbing with Divine ideas. It is our purpose to go through this section of the Holy Word; selecting, however, only such verses in each chapter and book as seem the most suggestive of truths, of the most vital interest, and universal application.

We begin with HOSEA. The remembrance of some facts connected with this man will greatly help us in our endeavours to reach the meaning and feel the power of certain of his utterances. He was a native of Israel, and lived in Samaria about 760 or 800 years B.C. His prophecy seems to have embraced a period of about 60 years, from Jeroboam's death to Hezekiah's ascension to the throne. He was contemporary with Isaiah, and preceded Joel, Jonah, and Amos. His prophecies are directed almost exclusively to the ten tribes who had sunk into the deepest idolatry. His style, as a writer, is very peculiar. "It is," says De Witte, "abrupt, unrounded, and ebullient, his rhythm hard, leaping, and violent." Like a bee he has been said to fly from one flower to another, to suck the honey from all the blossoms.

HOSEA.

No. XXI.

Subject: THE FOWLER OF RETRIBUTION.

"When they shall go, I will spread my net before them; I will bring them down as the fowls of heaven."—Hosca vii. 12.

It should be translated, "As they go I spread my net over them, I bring them down as fowls of the heavens."—*Kiel and Delitzsch*. "As they go." Whither? The preceding verse answers the question: to Egypt and Asshur seeking help in their difficulties rather than to Jehovah. Israel, here spoken of as Ephraim, being sorely pressed by Asshur, at one time seeks help from Egypt against Asshur; whilst at another they

try to secure the friendship of the latter. For what threatened Israel was the burden of "the king of princes." And that they tried to avert, partly by their coquettish arts (chap. viii. 9), and partly by appealing to the help of Egypt; and while so doing, they did not observe that they had fallen into the net of destruction by the power of Assyria. In this net will the Lord entangle them as a punishment. As they go thither God will spread His net over them like a bird-catcher, and bring them down to the earth like flying birds—i.e., bring them from the open air—that is to say, from freedom, unto the net of captivity or exile."

Here the work of retribution is spoken of as the work of the fowler, and it includes two

—entrapment and abase-

ENTRAPMENT. The spread-
the net refers to the
of the birds that lay on
ground. The literal refer-
ence is to 2 Kings xvii. 4.
The retributive providence
employed the Assyrians
yet, but so ensnared the
Israelites that they could not

Eliphaz observed this
great work of Providence,
and saith the wise in their
craftiness." So did David,
says, "He made a pit and
fell into it, and is fallen into the
which he made. His
end shall return upon his
head, and his violent deal-
ings shall come down upon his
head." How often in the
history of the world is this re-
tributive entrapment witnessed!

Even the crucifixion of Christ are
many examples in sacred
Scripture. Popery confined Luther
in Wartburg Castle, but
he translated that Bible
which shattered the whole

Anglican bigots con-
fined Bunyan in Bedford jail,
but he produced a book that
gave him immortal fame.
That entangled sinners
manufactured in heaven,
made on earth, made by
man's hands. Righteous Pro-
vidence allows them to be so
deceived by it as to render that
ment painful and lasting.
The end of the net.

ABASEMENT. "I will
bring them down as the fowls
of the air." However high up
they may tower in their am-
bition, retribution has
power to bring them down.
Their eyes are upon the

haughty that thou mayest bring
them down." There are men on
earth who in their worldly
prosperity, pride, and ambition
soar like the eagles high up in
heaven above all the rest. It
is said that an ancient philo-
sopher when once asked what
Jupiter did in the highest
Heaven, replied, "He pulls down
the haughty, and exalts the
humble." Hear these words,
"The pride of thine heart hath
deceived thee, thou that dwel-
lest in the clefts of the rock,
whose habitation is high, that
saith in his heart, Who shall
bring me to the ground? Though
thou exalt thyself as
the eagle, and though thou set
thy nest among the stars, thence
will I bring thee down, saith
the Lord."

CONCLUSION. Ponder well
thy condition, sinner. Not
only is the eye of retributive
justice upon thee wherever
thou art and whatever
thou doest, but it has all the
machinery for thy ruin. Art
thou down grovelling in the
earth, working out thy sordid
soul, it has nets that will
ensnare thee there! Or art
thou high up in the heavens
of worldly prosperity, and
haughty ambition, proudly
exulting in thy superiority, it
has shots that will reach thee
and bring thee down to the
dust. Thy only safety is the
cross.

No. XXII.

Subject: DIVINE DISPENSATIONS
ABUSED.

"Though I have bound and
strengthened their arms, yet do
they imagine mischief against me."
—Hosea vii. 15.

This text has received different translations. "And I have instructed them and strengthened their arms, and yet they think evil against me."—*Delitzsch*. "Whether I chastised or strengthened their arms yet they thought evil against me."—*Elzas*. I accept the latter translation; then the idea is, that God's treatment of man, whatever its character, afflictive or otherwise, is abused. Observe:—

I. THAT GOD'S DISPENSATIONS WITH MEN ARE CHARACTERISED BY VARIETY. "I have bound and strengthened," or, I have chastised and strengthened. The events of human life are of a mixed and conflicting character. There is affliction and health, prosperity and adversity, friendship and bereavement, sorrow and joy, wounding and healing. All these conflicting events are under the direction of the Great Father, whose aim in all is to make His children "meet for the inheritance of the saints in light." As the soil to be fruitful requires the frosts of winter as well as the sunbeams of spring and summer, man requires trials as well as joys to make his spirit fruitful in good works. As the loving father has the good of his child at heart whether he chastens him with a rod or presses him to his bosom, so has the Almighty Father in all His dispensations with men, whether the painful or the pleasant. "All these things worketh God oftentimes in man, that He may bring him back from the pit and enlighten him with the light of the living." Observe:—

II. THAT WHATEVER THE CHARACTER OF THE DIVINE DISPENSATIONS THEY ARE OFTEN PERVERTED. "They imagine mischief against me." It matters not what the treatment, they continue to rebel. They are like the sterile ground to which all seasons, all weathers are alike. Observe—First: *The force of the human will*. It can oppose the influences of God, and turn what He designs for good to ill. Man is no passive being. He is not to be acted upon as a machine, not to be coerced either by anathemas or benedictions. He is a voluntary agent. This links him to moral government, makes him responsible for his actions, and invests his existence with a momentous solemnity. Observe—Secondly: *The depravity of the human heart*. This force of will explains, not man's rebellion, for regenerate souls and holy angels have it, and they run in the way of the Divine commandments. The reason of the rebellion is the depravity of the human heart, which is desperately wicked.

CONCLUSION. Open your hearts to the various dispensations of Heaven. Be thankful for their variety. One is designed to touch a chord within thee that another cannot reach. The one may strike conviction of sin, another may tune thy heart to gratitude and hope.

"God, full as kind as He is wise,
So tempereth all the favours
He will do us,
That we His bounties may the
better prize,
And make His chastisement
less bitter to us ;

One while a scorching indignation burns

The flowers and blossoms of our hope away,
Which into scarcity our plenty turns,

And changeth new-mown grass to parched hay.

Anon His fruitful showers and pleasing dews,

Commixed with cheerful rays, He sendeth down,

And then the barren earth her crops renews,

Which with rich harvests hills and valleys crown ;

For, as to relish joys He sorrow sends,

So comfort or temptation still attends."

George Wither.

NO. XXIII.

Subject :—THE CONVENTIONAL CHURCH.

"Set the trumpet to thy mouth : he shall come as an eagle against the house of the Lord, because they have transgressed my covenant, and trespassed against my law. Israel shall cry unto me, My God, we know thee."—Hosea viii. 1, 2.

"It is not unusual," says Elzas, "for the prophets, without naming the invading foe, to announce his approach. (See Isa. xiii.) The words are singularly abrupt, and indicate the suddenness of the threatened invader. 'Like an eagle.' If this be a prophecy against Judah, as some have supposed, then by the eagle Nebuchadnezzar is meant, who is often compared to the king of birds. (See Jer. xlviii.; Ezek. xvii.; Dan. vii. 4.) But if the prophecy be against Israel, which is the most likely, then Shalmanezar, king of Assyria, is intended, who for

his rapidity, avarice, rapacity, and strength is fitly compared to this royal bird. 'The house of the Lord.' This cannot mean here the temple at Jerusalem, which is otherwise so designated, since the threatenings are most probably denounced against the kingdom of the ten tribes. It must therefore be taken to denote the people of Israel, the whole nation viewed as the family of God."

By the "house of the Lord," therefore, we are to understand not the temple at Jerusalem, nor the land of Judea, but Israel as a section of the professed people of God. The house of the Lord was a conventional church. Look at the words as presenting a conventional church in three aspects.

I. AS ENDANGERED. "He shall come as an eagle against the house of the Lord." How comes the eagle? Ravenously, suddenly, and swiftly; it pounces down on its prey with the rapidity of lightning, and fastens its talons on its heart. A conventional church is in greater danger than any secular community. Why? First: *Its guilt is greater.* It has the oracles of God, and it professes faith in those oracles, and yet its heart is out of sympathy with God and His laws. "Woe unto thee, Chorazim," &c. "He that knoweth his master's will and doeth it not shall be beaten with many stripes." The hell of conventional churches will be, methinks, deeper and darker than any other hell in the black domain of retribution.

Secondly: *Its influence is more pernicious.* Whose influence on society is the most

baneful—the man who denies God, the man who ignores Him, or the man that misrepresents Him? The last, I trow. The conventional church gives society a mal-representation of God and His religion. Of all the men in Christendom there is no man who is a greater bane to his race than he who wears the garb of religion but is destitute of its spirit. Surely the eagle of retribution will wing its way to no class more savagely and more quickly than to these conventional religionists. Look at these words as presenting conventional Christianity in another aspect:—

II. AS WARNED. "Set the trumpet to thy mouth." This is Heaven's command to the prophet. Blow a blast that shall thrill every heart in the vast congregation of Israel. Why sound the warning? First: Because the danger is *tremendous*. It is utter destruction. Secondly: Because the danger is *at hand*. The eagle has spread its pinions, has mounted the air, fastened his eye on the victim, and is about swooping down in fury. Thirdly: Because the danger *may be avoided*. Were there no escape, why blow the trumpet? Why raise the alarm? Thank God there is escape as long as life continues.

"While the lamp holds out to burn
The vilest sinner may return."

What is wanted now is a ministry of warning to conventional churches. We want bold, intrepid, fiery prophets, like unto Elijah, to sound the trumpet of alarm to all who are at ease in Zion.

Look at these words as presenting conventional Christianity in another aspect:—

III. AS REPENTANT. "Israel shall cry unto me, My God, we know thee." The alarm has been taken and the refuge is sought. "My God, we know thee." "This is life eternal to know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent."

Oh, hasten the day when all conventional churches shall be brought to a deep and experimental knowledge of God and His Son! When this transpires the dense cloud that has concealed the sun of Christianity shall be swept away, and the quickening beam shall fall on every heart. The mountain that has obstructed the chariot of redemptive truth shall be levelled to a plain, and the wheels shall move with lightning speed. "The word of the Lord shall have free course and be glorified."

The Pulpit and its Handmaids.

ORIGINAL SIMILITUDES.

MORAL MONARCHS.—"Whatever rules the soul is its real king, all other kings are mere vassals. The predominant love is that king, and as the predominant loves of men vary the world has many moral kingdoms. All in these kingdoms have the franchise, the power of electing their own sovereign, for every soul has the power of determining what object it shall love the most—the world, the flesh, the devil, or God."

REFORMATION.—"True reformation is not the lopping of branches from the trees of life; it is the changing of the sap, it works from the root, through the trunk into every stem and leaf."

HAPPINESS.—"He who pursues his own happiness as the end of life is like a man running to grasp his shadow, the faster he moves the swifter it moves the shadow. He only loses his life, his egotism, and finds his well-being. The selfless sacrifice of Christ tends to human happiness, only as men imbibe its spirit and repeat it in their own lives. Self-negation is soul-resurrection; he who is crucified with Christ alone really lives."

TRUTH.—"Time, beneath whose influence the pyramids crumble into dust, and the

flinty rocks decay, does not, and cannot, destroy a fact, nor strip a truth of one portion of its essential importance."

WEAK MEN.—"The souls of men of feeble purpose are the graveyards of good intentions; the true things that rise within them wither in the germ."

PENITENCE.—"True penitence weeps more copiously, as it feels itself most safe in the arms of love."

EVIL.—"Evil is but a jarring note or two in creation's long and joyous anthem. Evil is not an end, it produces good, as the storms of winter produce the summer fruit."

GIVING.—"Give with a heart glowing with generous sentiments; give as the fountain gives out its water, from its own swelling deeps; give as the air gives its vital breezes, unrestrained and free; give as the sun gives out its light, from the infinite abysses of its own nature."

TIME.—"The whole of this world's history from beginning to end is but a little island; the great ocean of eternity surges around, its every billow makes inroads on it; gradually it gets less, and never was so small as at this moment."

"SEVERITY towards wrong is not incompatible with kindness;

most scathing flash, or peal out the most terrible invective against meanness, hypocrisy, and wrong."

"**TRUTH** embodied in a holy life is truth in its most powerful form."

POWER OF CIRCUMSTANCES.—

"Away with the dogma that man is the creature of circumstances. The soul is a mariner, that can so pilot her bark as to make the most hostile winds waft her to the shores on which her heart is set. She is an eagle that can rise above the darkest thunder-cloud of circumstances, and bask in sunlight, whilst that cloud spends itself in wild tempests beneath her buoyant wing."

"**MIND** was made to govern matter; the senses should be the servants, not the sovereign, of the soul."

"**GOD** has given to each man a key to unlock certain hearts, and enter them almost at pleasure."

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pare the "unsearchable riches of Christ." I think of a masterpiece of music, every note suited to touch some of the deepest chords in human nature. It has awoken rapture in the men of past generations, and seems as potent in its stirring impulses now as ever. Still it may be exhaustible. The time may come when our Handels, Haydns, and Beethovens may be outgrown, and left behind as relics of the past; for all that is human has its limitations. I think of the great sun which has been giving out his beams, for I know not how many thousand years, in quickening and gladdening the unnumbered tribes of life that teem in air, and earth, and sea; in annually robing our world with forms of beauty, ever fresh and affluent, and causing the earth "to bring forth and bud, that

it may give seed to the sower and bread to the eater;" and as I think of this royal orb, I am impressed with the vastness of its resources. But though vast I feel it is not inexhaustible, it is finite. Its beams will grow dim, its fires die out, and the period may dawn when not a vestige of its existence shall be found throughout the districts of immensity. There is nothing that I can think of to which I can compare the resources of Christ. There is nothing, in fact, in the creation, for the creation itself is limited. Christ the "Sun of Righteousness," though He pours His soul-saving beams on millions of generations, and will light up the heavens of God with blessedness through unnumbered ages, must remain as warm and bright as ever."

Homiletical Breviaries.

No. LXX.

Subject: THE BETTER HOPE.

"A better hope."—Heb. vii. 19.

By the "better hope" here the writer means the Gospel, and the hope which the Gospel inspires is in truth "better" than any other hope found on this earth. I. It is a "hope" for HOLINESS, NOT SALVATION. Preachers have degraded and maligned Gospel hope by representing it as directed to *salvation* as an end. The one theme of nearly all the pulpits of Christendom is salvation rather than holiness. The object of hope held out by the Gospel is moral perfection—Godlikeness—"Be ye holy as I am holy." This is the highest end of being; this is heaven. II. It is a "hope" that is CERTAIN, NOT ILLUSORY. There is no other hope

on earth that is *sure*. All other hopes are more or less illusory and liable to disappointment. Moral goodness is attainable for all. (1) All have the nature for it; (2) the purpose of the Creator is for it. The one great object of the Creator is to make His creatures perfect. His universe, His government, His gospel, all work for this. III. It is a "hope" that is **EXPANDING, NOT NARROWING**. Most, if not all, other hopes on this earth narrow the sympathies of the soul, isolate men, detach their influence from that of others, and make them work within the region of selfishness. Not so with this hope; it expands the soul and universalizes it, it is directed to a common good—a good that cannot be monopolised, a good that is infinite as God. IV. It is a "hope" that is **OPERATIVE, NOT INACTIVE**. There are hopes that have no influence on the life, stir no faculty, that go off in sighs. This "better hope" works benevolently, devoutly, unremittingly; works to purify, and to bless.

No. LXXI.

Subject: SPIRITUAL REALITIES IN MATERIAL EMBLEMS.

"For the earth which drinketh in the rain that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth herbs meet for them by whom it is dressed, receiveth blessing from God: But that which beareth thorns and briers is rejected, and is nigh unto cursing; whose end is to be burned."—Heb. vi. 7, 8.

Nature is a parable. The seen adumbrates the unseen. Here we have the soul, truth, God, and character in emblem. I. The SOUL. The writer by implication speaks of the soul under the emblem of "*earth*." The human soul is like this earth in at least two respects. (1) It contains in itself the germs of all that it will ever manifest. Of the earth the Great Creator said, "whose seed is in itself." Through all the ages that have passed, no flower, herb, or tree—no life of any kind, vegetable or animal, has ever appeared whose seed was not in it at the beginning. Nor will the earth ever have more than it always contained. It is even so with the soul; the soul contains the seed of all that it ever will be. Man will never be more than himself, all the germs of his everlasting paradise are within him. (2) It only develops those germs as it turns itself toward the sun. Most, if not all, its germs would be dormant without the sunbeam. God is the sun of the soul, and it is only by the quickening beams of His "grace and truth" that its latent germs will be quickened into life and

brought to perfection. The soul can no more be educated without God, than the earth can be made fruitful without the sun. Here we have—II. TRUTH. The writer by implication speaks of truth under the emblem of rain. "Drinketh in the rain." (1) Divine truth is like rain in variety. The rain sometimes comes softly, sometimes in torrents; God's truth comes in varied forms, history, philosophy, poetry, precept, example, &c. Varied not only in form, but in *distribution*. It falls on oceans, sands, and rocks, as well as on fertile soils. (2) Divine truth is like rain in origin—"Cometh from heaven." (3) Divine truth is like rain in preciousness. How valuable is rain! What rain is to the earth, truth is to the soul, congenial and fertilising. Here we have—III. GOD. The writer by implication speaks of God as an *husbandman*—"By whom it is dressed." God is the great husbandman of souls. (1) He prepares the soil; (2) He deposits the seed; (3) He supplies the cultivating influences. He is frequently in the Scriptures compared to a husbandman. Here we have—IV. CHARACTER. The writer by implication speaks of character under the emblem of *productions*, "herbs," "thorns and briers." Moral character is the fruit of a man's life. As gardens, landscapes, forests, grow out of the earth, moral character grows out of conduct.

No. LXXII.

Subject: DEPARTED MARTYRS.

"And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held: And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?"—Rev. vi. 9, 10.

By common consent this is a sketch of departed martyrs, *i.e.*, men "that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held." If they had been slain for anything else they would not have been martyrs. I. They live in SACRED SECURITY. "I saw under the altar the souls of them." The "souls," not the bodies; the bodies had been destroyed, their ashes were left behind. Souls can exist apart from the body—a wonderful fact this. These souls were "under the altar." They were in a position of sacred security; no one could touch them there, safe for ever from their persecutors. II. They live in EARNEST CONSCIOUSNESS. They have an earnest consciousness of the past. "How

long, O Lord, most holy and true!" They remember the earth, remember the cruelties they received on the earth, and long, not maliciously, but benevolently, for justice being done to their persecutors. No doubt their desire was that God would strike such a moral conviction into their hearts on account of their wickedness that would lead them to repentance. Souls in heaven do not forget the past. III. They live in HOLY GRANDEUR. "White robes were given to them." Or, more properly, a white robe, emblem of purity and conquest.

"Their blood is shed
In confirmation of the noblest claim,
Our claim to feed upon immortal truth,
To walk with God, to be divinely free,
To soar and to anticipate the skies.
Yet few remember them. They lived unknown.
Till persecution dragged them into fame,
And chased them up to heaven. Their ashes flew—
No marble tells us whither. With their names
No bard embalms and sanctifies his song;
And history, so warm on meaner themes,
Is cold on this. She execrates indeed
The tyranny that doomed them to the fire,
But gives the glorious sufferers little praise."

—*Cooper.*

Subject: THE BEST THING BADLY USED.

"Unskilful in the word of righteousness."—Heb. v. 13.

We have here, I. The BEST THING ON EARTH. "The word of righteousness." Why is the Gospel called "the word of righteousness"? (1) Because it reveals the true standard of righteousness. God's character is the foundation of righteousness; God's will is the rule, the Gospel is the revelation of this rule. (2) Because it reveals the highest Exemplar of righteousness—Jesus Christ. (3) Because it reveals the true way to righteousness—following Christ. We have here, II. The best thing on earth BADLY USED. "Unskilful." An unskilful use of the "Word" has been, and is, the curse of Christendom. When is it "unskilfully" used? (1) When it is used *controversially*: fighting for dogmas. (2) When it is used *sectarianly*: fighting for sects. (3) When it is used *mercenaryly*: fighting for money and position. (4) When it is used *unlovingly*: lacking the unbounded love and exquisite tenderness of the system.

Literary Notices.

[We hold it to be the duty of an Editor either to give an early notice of the books sent to him for remark, or to return them at once to the Publisher. It is unjust to praise worthless books; it is robbery to retain unnoticed ones.]

THE REVIEWER'S CANON.

In every work regard the author's end,
Since none can compass more than they intend.

THE WORDS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT, AS ALTERED BY TRANSMISSION,
AND ASCERTAINED BY MODERN CRITICISM, FOR POPULAR USE.
By Rev. WILLIAM MILLIGAN, D.D., and Rev. ALEX. ROBERTS, D.D.,
Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 38, George Street.

THE title explains the purport of this book. That certain alterations and errors would creep into the Sacred Text with the lapse of time, is what might have been expected, unless the Great God had continued a special superintendence of it. Authors, even in this age, when printing has been brought to such perfection, know the difficulty of getting their MS. accurately through the press. But the original text of Scripture has been transmitted not by type, but by successive transcription of copies. Hence the variation in the MSS. of the New Testament. Biblical critics tell us that there are no less than 150,000 various readings within the compass of the New Testament. "When we come," says the author of this volume, "to examine the matter, we find that the vast array of various readings which has been mentioned, and which appears at first sight so formidable, loses all power to discompose the Christian, and even becomes to him a source of congratulation and rejoicing. At least nine out of every ten of these readings are of no practical importance whatever. They involve the mere substitution of one synonymous word for another, or the use of a compound instead of a simple term, or a change of the order in which different words or clauses are to be read, and have thus scarcely any perceptible influence on the meaning of the text."

For this we are thankful. At the same time, it is well to know the variations, and how far they affect the meaning. This is the object of this able book, which we heartily recommend to our readers.

THE BOOK OF JOB, TRANSLATED FROM THE HEBREW TEXT : WITH AN INTRODUCTION AND NOTES, CRITICAL AND EXPLANATORY. By A. ELZAS.

THE MINOR PROPHETS, TRANSLATED FROM THE HEBREW TEXT ; WITH AN INTRODUCTION AND A COMMENTARY, CRITICAL, PHILOLOGICAL, AND EXEGETICAL. By A. ELZAS. Vol. I. London : Trübner and Co., 57, Ludgate Hill.

THE first of these volumes, viz., that on "Job," came into our hands some months ago, and we regret that a notice of it has been so long delayed. We are glad now to receive from the author "The Minor Prophets." We have a very high estimate of his labours as a translator, critic, and expounder. We have frequently had occasion to consult him both on the Book of "Proverbs" and on "Job," and have seldom referred to him without obtaining considerable help. His renderings are not only faithful, but vigorous, clear, and beautiful ; and his notes seldom fail to throw fresh light upon the text. Indeed, we confess our obligation to him for lighting up many a dark path, and suggesting many trains of useful thought. As we ourselves are proceeding through the "Minor Prophets," we shall have occasion to consult the work before us, as we have on the "Proverbs of Solomon" and the "Book of Job," and we doubt not we shall find Mr. Elzas as helpful as ever. Heartily do we commend these two beautiful little volumes to students of the Sacred Book.

THE RECONCILIATION OF RELIGION AND SCIENCE ; BEING ESSAYS ON IMMORTALITY, INSPIRATION, MIRACLES, AND THE BEING OF CHRIST. By REV. T. W. FOWLE, M.A. London : Henry King and Co., 65, Cornhill.

"THE mode of reconciliation between religion and science suggested in this book," says the author, "consists in the absolute unconditional surrender of the province of religion to the methods of scientific investigation. And whatever else it may show, this at least is clear, that it is possible for the same man to hold the Christian creed and yet to belong to the empirical school of thought, and to accept every scientific conclusion which those who are entitled to be heard declare to be established." The subjects treated of are—"The Divine Character of Christ, Science and Immortality, Morality and Immortality, Christianity and Immortality, Religion and Fact, The Miracles of God, The Miracles of Man, Scientific Account of Inspiration, The Inspiration of the Jews and of the Bible, The Divinity of Christ and Modern Thought, The Church and the Working Classes." The purpose which the author set before him is a noble one,

and urgently demanded by the age. He has worked it out in a liberal spirit, with much learning, philosophic force, and literary ability. It is a book that requires, and will well repay, thoughtful perusal and prolonged study. The author is one of those clergymen who look at truth, not through Church windows, but through the phenomena of the universe and the Bible of God. The book abounds in many original thoughts and forceful suggestions. Take the following, on self-consciousness in relation to Christ as an example : "What is with us the obtrusion of self into our works, not at all in a sinful, but simply in a necessary form, corresponds in Him to the consciousness of the Father doing all the works. His meat or drink was to finish that work, His glory in having finished it. And it is remarkable that this consciousness of self, this reflection upon our motives and successes, this almost agonizing survey of our work and life, is particularly strong in religious reformers. The men who have most moved the world in religion have been those to whom the movements of their own souls have been most painfully clear : for instance, St. Paul, Luther, and Milton. Consider the former painfully conscious of his bodily appearance, his reputation, his conversion, his very handwriting, his labours ; consider the latter brooding over his blindness, his treatment, his failure, the evil days on which he had fallen. And these men powerfully affected the world in which they lived, whereas Homer and Shakespeare, of all men the most destitute of self-consciousness, fade away from history, and are spirits' voices rather than distinct human beings. But in Christ we have an element of self-forgetfulness so to speak, combined with a power to move humanity, which renders Him unique in history. But then, to be unique in history, what is it but to be divine !"

LIFE OF REV. WILLIAM ANDERSON, LL.D. By GEORGE GILFILLAN.
London : Hodder and Stoughton, 27, Paternoster Row.

DR. ANDERSON is characterised by his able biographer as one of the most remarkable men and ministers in Scotland during the nineteenth century. This estimate seems to be general. We have read from time to time in what are called "religious newspapers," such high encomiums that we had received the impression he was a man of transcendent genius. Years ago we read his work on "Regeneration," which was one of the ablest productions on the subject that ever fell into our hands ; although we confess it did not impress us that the author was a man of such wonderful ability. When this book came under our notice, however, we fully expected to have our estimate raised to the standard of his enthusiastic admirers ; but we have been disappointed. We have read the selections

from his writings contained in this volume, and the thinking seems to me somewhat commonplace, the theology conventional, and the spirit not very broad in its sympathies, nor stirring in its utterances. We have no doubt that had we heard him our judgment would have been far more exalted. Albeit, this volume is a most valuable one. It is the biography of a true man, a vigorous thinker, and an able minister of Jesus Christ: and it is written by one whom we have for many years regarded as one of the greatest men of his age, a man of undoubted genius, fertile thought, and affluent sympathies. Many paragraphs in the biographic sketch are masterpieces in conception and language.

POEMS BY THE LATE JOHN WILLIAMS. EDITED BY HIS SON THOMAS WILLIAMS. London: H. Sotheran and Co., 10, Little Tower Street.

It is an incalculable advantage to have a man for a father who is not only Christly in character, but far above the average in intellect, aspirations, and culture. Such a father imposes on his offspring obligations to a noble life of no ordinary magnitude and weight. Alas! many a great man has had sons who have been incapable of appreciating their intellectual and moral characters, and destitute of all filial love and devotion. In this book we have a worthy son of a worthy sire, demonstrating his filial love and admiration by sketching his father's life, and publishing the poetic effusions of his father's exalted genius and loving heart. The son himself is the author of a volume of poems of no mean merit, to which we called the attention of our readers not long ago. This book has several poetic gems.

COME AND WELCOME TO JESUS CHRIST. THE GREATNESS OF THE SOUL. THE WATER OF LIFE. THE PHARISEE AND THE PUBLICAN. LITTLE BOOKS BY JOHN BUNYAN. Edited by GEORGE OFFOR. London: Blackie and Son, Paternoster Buildings.

To characterise John Bunyan's productions would be a superfluity, to recommend them would be impertinent. Who does not know that his theology is puritanic, his style dramatic, and his genius regnant in all! In these three beautiful little volumes, which are only parts of a series, we have four of the subjects which he discussed with rare ability, viz., "Come and welcome to Jesus, The Greatness of the Soul, The Water of Life, The Pharisee and the Publican." The whole series, we are informed, will comprise the principal practical, doctrinal, and experimental treatises of the author, and some of his allegorical writings. Each volume will be complete in itself, and will contain one treatise or more, according to length. And while the separate volumes will be found convenient for private use, and well adapted for presentation, the complete series will form a very neat and elegant "Bunyan Library."



The Theology of Shakespeare.

I.—HIS IDEAS OF GOD.

"Have any of the rulers believed on Him?"—John viii. 48.

IT is my intention to write a few Homilies on the Christianity of Shakespeare. In doing this, I am not called upon to give a sketch of the mortal life of this illustrious man—this "king of kings" in the realm of English literature; nor am I called upon to portray the splendour of his genius, and to assign him his true place in the domain of British authorship. This is unnecessary; all acknowledge his transcendent powers. Our most distinguished *literati* loyally proclaim him their chief. Neither comes it within my purpose to vindicate all his sentiments, or to justify all his utterances. Some of his thoughts appear to me at times immoral and unchaste, and his expressions extravagant and profane. Nor, further, is it my purpose to estimate the character and influence of his writings upon the mind of the world; whether it has been more useful than deleterious; whether its circle is likely to widen or contract. Nor, lastly, do I feel called upon to demonstrate that he was Christly in sentiment or character. To judge from the little we know of his life, the general tenor of his writings, and from the words of his last will and testament, he was what passed for a Christian in his own times, and would pass

hoods, who aver that Christianit
mean order, or of an inferior
Shakespeare's theology was Ch
with unabashed confidence in th
Christianity is worthy of the high
by the highest genius; and is usef
My attention will be occupied in
tions: that Shakespeare's theolo
Christian; and that his theolo
Christian, it demands the rever
class of mind.

I. HIS THEOLOGY WAS IN THE
leading ideas of Christianity are c
angels, prayer, sin, &c. If Shake
tical with these, then he was Chri
proceed to notice—

First: *His ideas of God.* He w
he uses no arguments to prove a S
throughout the whole of his writin
of a God as unquestioned and un
he a *pantheist*. His God was not ar

He regarded God as *all-seeing*. Take the following expressions :—

" However wickedness outstrips men, it has no wings to fly from God "

" All things lie within the will of God." ^a

" Can we outrun the heavens ? "

" God knows of all pure devotion." ^b

" Heaven hath its countless eyes to view men's acts." ^c

" It is not so with Him that all things knows,
As 'tis with us that square our guess by shows." ^d

He regarded God as *all-just*.

" Take heed : For God holds vengeance in His hand,
To hurl upon their heads that break His law."

" God needs no indirect nor lawless course
To cut off those who have offended Him." ^e

" Heaven is above all, yet there sits a judge
That no king can corrupt." ^f

" Put we our counsel to the will of Heaven,
Who, when he sees the hours ripe on earth,
Will rain hot vengeance on offenders' heads." ^g

" Most just is God, who rights the innocent." ^h

He regarded God as *all-merciful*. Take the following oft-quoted passage as an example :—

" The quality of mercy is not strained :
It droppeth as the gentle rain from Heaven
Upon the place beneath. It is twice blessed.
It blesseth him that gives, and him that takes.
'Tis mightiest in the mightiest ; it becomes
The thronèd monarch better than his crown.
His sceptre shows the force of temporal power,
The attribute to awe and majesty,
Wherein doth sit the dread and fear of kings.
But mercy is above this sceptred sway,
It is enthronèd in the heart of kings :
It is an attribute to God himself,
And earthly power doth then show likest God's

^a Henry V. ; ^b Henry VI. ; ^c Pericles, Prince of Tyre ; ^d All's Well that Ends Well ; ^e Richard III. ; ^f Henry VIII., act iii., sc. 1 ; ^g Richard III., act i., sc. 2 ; ^h Richard III., act i.

When mercy seasons justice. Therefore, Jew,
 Tho' justice be thy plea, consider this—
 That in the course of justice none of us
 Should see salvation. We do pray for mercy,
 And that same prayer doth teach us all to render
 The deeds of mercy." ^a

"Heaven is the widow's champion and defence." ^b

From these representations of the Divine character let us turn for a moment—

To his references to the *operations* of God. Constantly does he refer to Him as the all-sustaining, all-controlling One—

"There is a special Providence in the fall of a sparrow." ^c

"He that doth the ravens feed, providently
 Caters for the sparrow." ^d

"But what a point, my lord, your falcon made;
 And what a pitch she flew above the rest!
 To see how God in all His creatures works!" ^e

"The self-same Heaven that frowns on me
 Looks sadly down on him." ^f

"A greater power than we can contradict
 Hath thwarted our intents." ^g

"There's a divinity that shapes our ends,
 Rough-hew them how we will." ^h

These are only a few out of the many representations which our illustrious dramatist gives of the character and operations of God, and who that knows the Bible will doubt their identity with those of Sacred Writ? Did he regard the Eternal as Almighty? So did he who said, "With God all things are possible." Did he regard the Great One as all-seeing? So did he who said, "Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world; neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight." Did he speak of God's justice and mercy?

^a Merchant of Venice, act iv., sc. 1; ^b Richard II.; ^c Hamlet, act v., sc. 2; ^d As You Like It, act ii., sc. 3; ^e Henry VI., act ii., sc. 1; ^f Richard III., act v., sc. 3; ^g Romeo and Juliet, act v., sc. 3; ^h Hamlet, act v., sc. 2

Hear what the Scripture says on these points: "A God of truth, and not of iniquity; just and right is He." "God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love." "Thy mercy, O Lord, is great unto the heavens, and Thy truth unto the clouds." "The Lord is very pitiful and of tender mercy."

Did he speak of an over-ruling Providence as a divinity within that "shapes our ends"? Does not the idea pervade the Bible that the "way of man is not in himself, and that God worketh in us to will and to do his own good pleasure"?

But he not only refers to the character and operations of God, but to His *mediation*, His manifestation in Christ. He believed in the Divine *incarnation*. Thus he speaks of—

"The world's ransom, blessed Mary's son." ^a

Again, we have these words—

"Those holy fields,
Over whose acres walked those blessed feet,
Which fourteen hundred years ago were nailed
For our advantage on the bitter cross," ^b

He accepted the atonement of Christ:

"Alas! alas!
Why, all the souls that are were forfeit once,
And He that might the 'vantage best have took
Found out the remedy. How would you be,
If He, which is the top of judgment, should
But judge you as you are? O think on that;
And mercy then will breathe within your lips
Like man new made." ^c

Again:

"I charge you, as you hope to have redemption
By Christ's dear blood, shed for our grievous sins,
That you depart and lay no hands on me." ^d

^a Richard II., act iv., sc. 1; ^b Henry IV., act i., sc. 1; ^c Measure for Measure, act ii., sc. 2; ^d Richard III., act i., sc. 4

He regarded this mediation as universal in its aspect :

“ Now by the death of Him who died for all.” *

And, then, his own confidence and interest in this mediation are expressed in his last will and testament, preserved in the office of the Prerogative Court of Canterbury. These are his words, given in his own orthography : “ First, I comend my soule into the handes of God my Creator, hoping and assuredlie beleeving through thonellie merites of Jesus Christe, my Saviour, to be made partaker of lyfe everlastinge, and my bodye to the earth whereof yt ys made.”

Now, how all these ideas of God in Christ agree with the words of Scripture ! “ And the word was made flesh and dwelt among us.” “ God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” “ God commendeth His love to us in that when we were yet sinners Christ died for us.” “ As by the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation, and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned ; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life.”

CONCLUSION. Without proceeding further, is it not obvious that the God of the Scriptures was the God that the greatest poet, thinker, writer of the world, recognised and adored ? His God was not the mere Creator of all things, nor the righteous Governor of the Universe, but a REDEEMER. Shakespeare was neither an Atheist, Deist, Pantheist, nor Unitarian. He saw the Eternal in Christ. The God of the New Testament was great enough for his lofty genius. His manifestation in Christ did not shock his great intellect or outrage his transcendent intuitions.

* Henry VI., Part II., act i., sc. 1.

These ideas of God which pervade the Scriptures Shakespeare propounds without using any argument to commend them. He recognised them as things as real, patent, near, and interesting to universal man as nature itself. Instead of regarding them as requiring evidence they were the conclusive proofs of his propositions, the final authorities. They appear to his great soul so self-evident that he would as soon bring forward astronomical evidence to prove the existence of the sun when it was flooding the world with light and heat, as to follow their utterance by any attempt to demonstrate their truth. He knew that they were so congruous to the common sense and conscience of humanity as to carry with them their own credentials and authority. Nor does he use them sparingly; in some form or other they run through all his poems and plays. They permeate his productions, they shape some of his grandest thoughts, and give an orient splendour to some of his sublimest creations. In truth, the finest works of his genius are to the ideas of the Bible what our most magnificent cathedrals are to the minerals and productions of the earth, materials with which he has built up his most stately and imperishable superstructures.

Who are you, then, that reject the God of the New Testament, and spurn as unreasonable His manifestation in Christ? You belong to a large, I know, and, I fear, a growing class in England, who arrogate a mental superiority too great to accept the Divine revelations of the Bible. Shame on your arrogance! What is your intellect to that of Shakespeare? At best you are but pigmies to a giant. If you believe in England's illustrious dramatist, and you are constantly canting of the unrivalled splendour of his genius, where is your consistency in despising that Bible at whose altar he kindled his lamps, and from whose treasury he derived his grandest illustrations?

Homiletic Sketches on the Book of Psalms.

Our Purpose.—Many learned and devout men have gone *philologically* through this *TEHELIM*, this book of Hebrew hymns, and have left us the rich results of their inquiries in volumes within the reach of every Biblical student. To do the mere verbal *hermeneutics* of this book, even as well as it has been done, would be to contribute nothing fresh in the way of evoking or enforcing its Divine ideas. A thorough *HOMILETIC* treatment it has never yet received, and to this work we here commit ourselves, determining to employ the best results of modern Biblical scholarship.

Our Method.—Our plan of treatment will comprise four sections:—(1.) The *HISTORY* of the passage. Lyric poetry, which the book is, is a delineation of living character; and the key, therefore, to unlock the meaning and reach the spirit of the words is a knowledge of the men and circumstances that the poet sketches with his lyric pencil.—(2.) *ANNOTATIONS* of the passage. This will include short explanatory notes on any ambiguous word, phrase, or allusion that may occur.—(3.) The *ARGUMENT* of the passage. A knowledge of the main drift of an author is amongst the most essential conditions for interpreting his meaning.—(4.) The *HOMILETICS* of the passage. This is our main work. We shall endeavour so to group the Divine ideas that have been legitimately deduced, as to suggest such thoughts, and indicate such sermonising methods, as may promote the proficiency of modern pulpit ministrations.

**Subject: Fretful Envy of the Wicked. (3) Facts reveal
its Folly—(continued).**

“A little that a righteous man hath
Is better than the riches of many wicked,
For the arms of the wicked shall be broken;
But the Lord upholdeth the righteous.
The Lord knoweth the days of the upright;
And their inheritance shall be for ever.
They shall not be ashamed in the evil time;
And in the days of famine they shall be satisfied.
But the wicked shall perish,
And the enemies of the Lord shall be as the fat of lambs.
They shall consume: into smoke shall they consume away.”

—Psalm xxxvii. 16–20.

HISTORY.—See Vol. XXXII., p. 266.

ANNOTATIONS.—*Ver. 16.*—“*A little that a righteous man hath is better than the riches of many wicked.*” “Good is a little to the righteous.” The clause exemplifies two remarkable deficiencies of the Hebrew language: the want of a distinct form for the comparative degree, which can only be suggested by construction or the context; and the want of

the verb *have*, which is common to the whole Semitic family of languages. "Than the noise," tumult, turmoil,—which attends the acquisition and the care of great possessions. That the Hebrew word denotes this incident of wealth rather than wealth itself, may be inferred not only from its etymology, and its use in 1 Sam. iv. 14, xiv. 19; 1 Kings xviii. 41; but from the analogy of Psalm xxxix. 7, and Prov. xv. 16. "Of many wicked"—whose noisy and vexatious wealth is here contrasted with the quiet enjoyment of one righteous man, not only with respect to present ease of mind, but also to their future destiny, as stated in the next verse.—*Alexander*. But though the word "riches" literally means noise or tumult, and though there is often a great deal of rattle and bustle, not only in the attainment but in the possession of wealth, I think the word here refers rather to the abundance of wealth.

Ver. 17.—"For the arms of the wicked shall be broken; but the Lord upholdeth the righteous." Because the arm is the instrument with which we work out our plans, it is here used for power itself rather than its instrument. The idea of the verse is that the wicked will lose their power to carry out their evil purposes, but the Lord will sustain the good in all their endeavours.

Ver. 18.—"The Lord knoweth the days of the upright; and their inheritance shall be for ever." "Jahve observeth the days of the perfect; and their inheritance shall endure for ever."—*Delitzsch*. This language implies that the Great Father exercises a special vigilance over the good, and will give a permanence to their privileges and enjoyments.

Ver. 19.—"They shall not be ashamed in the evil time, and in the days of famine they shall be satisfied." The word "ashamed" refers to disappointment. The idea is, When times of calamity come, in seasons of famine or want, they will find their expectations arising from confidence in God fully realised.

Ver. 20.—"But the wicked shall perish." The word "perish" means destruction, and the destruction may refer to their ruin here or their ruin hereafter, or to both. "And the enemies of the Lord shall be as the fat of lambs, &c." *Delitzsch* renders this "the enemies of Jahve are like the glory of the meadows, they vanish away, like smoke they disappear." Instead of the fat of lambs the margin has it "the preciousness." But *Gesenius*, *De Wette*, *Barnes*, and others, agree with the translation of *Delitzsch*, and suppose the words to refer to the glory, the beauty, or preciousness of the meadow.

ARGUMENT.—See Vol. XXXII., page 267.

HOMILETICS. In these verses the writer continues pointing

to facts illustrative of the folly of good men envying wicked men their prosperity. The facts here are three:—

I. THAT THE GOOD IN COMPARATIVE POVERTY ARE BETTER OFF THAN THE WICKED WITH PLENTY. "A little that a righteous man hath is better than the riches of many wicked." The same sentiment is expressed in Prov. xv. 12—17, "Better is a little with the fear of the Lord than great riches and trouble therewith." "Better is a dinner of herbs where love is, than a stalled ox and hatred therewith." Better for two reasons. (1) His condition would be a more *enjoyable* one. He would have higher happiness. His happiness would spring from within, that of the other from without. The happiness of the one, therefore, would be sensational, the other spiritual; the one selfish, the other generous; the one decreasing, the other heightening. The ungodly rich have their portion in this life and in this life only. (2) His condition would be a more *honourable* one. The one is honoured for what he has, the other for what he is. The one is honoured less and less as people get morally enlightened, the other more and more. The one is honoured only here by the depraved, the other is honoured yonder by angels and by God. The bread and the water of the poor are of more value in the universe than the lordly estates of the proud worldling. They have a quality and a taste in them that no amount of worldly wealth possesses. As the waters that flow from the aromatic hills of the east are sweetly seasoned with their spicy springs, so the little of the good man is seasoned with the good will of heaven. The godly man's little is a priceless diamond flashing with the approbation of God, but the riches of the wicked, however abundant, are but rubbish in the sight of heaven. Another fact here is:—

II. THAT THE GOOD ARE DIVINELY SUPPORTED, BUT THE WICKED SHALL LOSE THEIR POWER. "The arms of the wicked shall be broken; but the Lord upholdeth the righteous."

First: The power of the *wicked to execute their purpose is to be destroyed*. They have often a great deal of power, they have strong "arms." They have the arm of literature, con-

mercy, law, war, and with these they work out their iniquitous plans; but the "arms" are not imperishable, they must be "broken," every one of them, sooner or later. It is a wonder that righteous heaven has not struck them with paralysis long before this.

Secondly: The power of the good to prosecute their mission *will be Divinely sustained.* "The Lord upholdeth the righteous." "Fear thou not, for I am with thee; be not dismayed, for I am thy God; I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness. Behold, all they that were incensed against thee shall be ashamed and confounded; they shall be as nothing, and they that strive with thee shall perish" (Isaiah xli. 10, 11). (1) The power to do good is Divine. (2) Divine power is indestructible. "If God be for us, who can be against us?" Another fact here is:—

III. THAT THE GOOD SHALL HAVE A PERMANENT INHERITANCE, BUT RUIN IS THE DOOM OF THE WICKED. "The Lord knoweth the days of the upright, and their inheritance shall be for ever." What is the "inheritance" of the righteous? The Lord Himself. "The Lord is my portion." The godly heart is satisfied with nothing else, whatever is short of this is worthless: with this all things are invaluable, without this all else is worse than useless. When we have given our strongest love to another, what do we crave for in return? Not his or her property, however valuable, but his or herself, nothing less. The heart wants the object of its love, wants his love, his fellowship, his life in return. This is the "inheritance" of the good, and it shall be "for ever."

First: This "inheritance" will *preclude all disappointment.* "They shall not be ashamed in the evil time." Whatever comes, whatever the wrecks of life, and the riot of confusion, with this "inheritance" there will be calm courage. "I am persuaded that neither life nor death," &c.

Secondly: This "inheritance" will *yield satisfaction under the most unfavourable circumstances.* "In the days of famine

they shall be satisfied." "We glory in tribulation, knowing that tribulation worketh patience." &c.

But what of the wicked? They "shall perish, and the enemies of the Lord shall be as the fat of lambs; they shall consume; into smoke shall they consume away." "Enemies of the Lord!" How profoundly vile in spirit, how monstrously foolish in attitude! But they shall "perish." Perish as the "preciousness of lambs." The lovely pasture on which the lambs feed and gambol. They may appear like the meadows green, flourishing, and decorated with flowers, but they shall "perish," and how? By fire, "into smoke shall they consume away." As smoke disappears they shall disappear; their wealth, power, shall vanish for ever away.

CONCLUSION. These facts, like the facts in the previous paragraph, thunder out the grand text of the first verse, "Fret not thyself because of evil-doers, neither be thou envious against the works of iniquity." Afflicted, oppressed, paupered men of God, envy not the wicked; keep the fiend at bay; let not his breath touch thy spirit; do the right, have confidence in the justice of the universe, and calmly await the great explaining and balancing day.

"Go boldly on. Do what is right.
Ask not for private ease or good.
Let one bright star direct thy sight,
The polar star of rectitude.

"Go boldly on. And though the road
Thy weary, bleeding feet shall rend,
Angels shall keep thee, bear thy load,
And God Himself thy steps attend.

"Do right. And thou hast naught to fear;
Right hath a power that makes thee strong.
The night is dark, but light is near;
The grief is short, the joy is long.

"Know, in thy dark and troubled day,
To friends of truth and right are given,
When strifes and toils have passed away,
The sweet rewards and joys of Heaven."—*T. C. Upham.*

Homiletic Sketches on the Book of Job.

The Book of Job is one of the grandest sections of Divine Scripture. It has never yet, to our knowledge, been treated in a purely Homiletic method for Homiletic ends. Besides many learned expositions on the book found in our general commentaries, we have special exegetical volumes of good scholarly and critical worth; such as *Dra. Barnes*, *Wemyss*, *Mason Goode*, *Noyes Lee*, *Deitzsch*, and *Herman Hedwick Bernard*: the last is in every way a masterly production. For us, therefore, to go into philology and verbal criticism, when such admirable works are available to all students, would be superfluous, if not presumption. Ambiguous terms, when they occur, we shall of course explain, and occasionally suggest an improved rendering: but our work will be chiefly, if not entirely, Homiletic. We shall essay to bring out from the grand old words those Divine verities which are true and vital to man as man in all lands and ages. These truths we shall frame in an order as philosophic and suggestive as our best powers will enable us to do; and this in order to help the earnest preachers of God's Holy Word.

Subject: Job's Argument with his Three Friends. (1) **Interdependency of Thought in Religion.**

"And Job answered and said,
No doubt but ye are the people,
And wisdom shall die with you.
But I have understanding as well as you,
I am not inferior to you.
Yea, who knoweth not such things as these?
I am as one mocked of his neighbour,
Who calleth upon God, and he answereth him.
The just, upright man is laughed to scorn.
He that is ready to slip with his feet
Is as a lamp despised in the thought of him that is at ease."—

Job xii. 1—5.

EXEGETICAL REMARKS.—This chapter begins Job's reply, not to any one of his friends, but to the three, and it extends to the close of the fourteenth chapter. It comprises two sections—his argument with men, and his appeal to heaven: The first extends from chap. xii. 1 to xiii. 20; and the second from that verse to the end of chap. xiv. Zophar, who had spoken last, had commenced his speech by charging Job with the design of overwhelming his opponents with a multitude of words. Job now retorts, and says that it is they who seek to overwhelm him with their number and the display of their unanimity—for they are three to

one, and all of the same opinion ; that, namely, he must have been a great sinner : as if, forsooth, three men could not agree in their conclusions and yet err.

Ver. 2.—" *Ye are the people, and wisdom shall die with you,*" The reference is not to the one but to the three. Here is a strong irony, a withering sarcasm. He had felt that his previous arguments had gone for nothing, and now in the bitter anguish of his soul he speaks in scathing sarcasm. His whole manhood seems to rise up against the twaddling sophistries of the dogmatists who came to comfort him : You monopolise wisdom ; when you are gone all wisdom will be extinct.

Ver. 3.—" *But I have understanding as well as you ; I am not inferior to you.*" I have reason and conscience as well as you, and know as well as you the things of which you speak. " *Who knoweth not such things as these !*" As if he had said, "You consider your sentiments very original, but they are mere platitudes."

Ver. 4.—" *I am as one mocked of his neighbour.*" "A derision to his friend am I."—*Elias*. I am as a laughing-stock. "Mockery is not argument ; to laugh a man down is a very easy matter, but it proves nothing. Even a perfectly righteous man may be made a laughing-stock."

Ver. 5.—" *He that is ready to slip with his feet is as a lamp despised in the thought of him that is at ease.*" The mind of one who is at ease hath contempt for calamity ; it hath it quite ready for those who totter with their feet. It is not at all unusual to see people, whom success has rendered arrogant, laugh at those who are labourers under calamity, and are on the point of falling from their greatness. This sentiment is expressed also by the Psalmist (Ps. cxxiii. 4). "Our soul is exceedingly filled with the scorning of them that are at ease, and with the contempt of the proud."—*Bernard*. Critics have laboured much on this verse, and reached conflicting interpretations. I think that Dr. Barnes has got the true idea. He says, "A man in adversity when falling from a high condition of honour, is regarded as an almost extinguished lamp, that is now held in contempt, and is cast away. When the torch was blazing it was regarded as of value ; when nearly extinguished it would be regarded as worthless, and would be cast away. So, when a man was in prosperity he would be looked up to as a guide and example. In adversity his counsels would be rejected, and he would be looked upon with contempt. Nothing can be more certain or more common than the fact here adverted to. The rich and the great are looked up to with respect and veneration : their words and actions have an influence which those of no other men have ; when they begin to fall others are willing to hasten their fall ; long cherished but secret envy begins

to show itself ; those who wish to rise rejoice in the ruin ; and they are looked upon with contempt in proportion to their former honour, rank, and power. They are regarded as an extinguished torch, of no value, and cast aside.

HOMILETICS. Now in these verses Job asserts his moral manhood, he rises from the pressure of his sufferings and the loads of sophistry and implied calumny which his friends had laid upon his spirit, speaks out with the heart of a true man. In the sarcastic way in which he treats their arrogance, and in the reproof which he administers to them on account of their heartless insolence towards him, we have an illustration of *independency of thought in religion*, and this shall be our subject. A man though crushed in every respect, like Job, should not surrender this. That this is man's prerogative, which he is bound to vindicate and develop, appears from the following considerations :—

I. FROM THE CAPACITY OF THE SOUL. First: Man has a capacity to form *conceptions of the cardinal principles of religion*. He can think of God, the soul, duty, moral obligation, Christ, immortality, &c. Secondly: Man has a capacity to *realise the practical force* of these conceptions. He can turn them into emotions to fire his soul ; he can embody them as principles in his life.

II. FROM THE DESPOTISM OF CORRUPT RELIGION. Corrupt religion, whether Pagan or Christian, Papal or Protestant, always seeks to crush this independency in the individual soul. It seeks to make men blind devotees, thoughtless limbs of its sect. Dogmatists want to make a religion for you, as the builder your houses, the tailor your clothes ; therefore, be on your guard, and say to these presumptuous mortals, as Job said, "I have understanding as well as you."

III. FROM THE NECESSARY MEANS OF PERSONAL RELIGION. Religion in the soul begins in individual thinking. "I thought of my ways," &c. Faith, hope, charity ; neither of these cardinal graces can enter the soul, or grow there, without individual thinking.

IV. FROM THE CONDITIONS OF MORAL USEFULNESS. Every

man is bound to be spiritually useful, but he cannot be so without knowledge, and knowledge implies independent study and conviction. Force of thought, force of conviction, force of purpose, are the essentials of usefulness.

V. FROM THE TEACHINGS OF THE BIBLE. Men are commanded to use their reason. "Come, now, and let us reason together," &c. "Search the Scriptures," &c. "Prove all things," &c. Indeed, the very existence of the Bible implies our power and obligation in this matter.

VI. FROM THE TRANSACTIONS OF THE JUDGMENT. In the great day of God men will have to give an account of their thoughts and words as well as deeds. Let us, therefore, have the spirit of Job, and when amongst bigots, who seek to impose their views on us and override our judgment, let us say, "No doubt ye are the people, and wisdom shall die with you; but I have understanding as well as you."

Sermonic Glances at the Gospel of St. John.

As our purpose in the treatment of this Gospel is purely the development, in the briefest and most suggestive form, of Sermonic outlines, we must refer our readers to the following works for all critical inquiries into the author and authorship of the book, and also for any minute criticisms on difficult clauses. The works we shall especially consult are:—"Introduction to New Testament," by Bleek; "Commentary on John," by Tholuck; "Commentary on John," by Hengstenberg; "Introduction to the Study of the Gospels," by Westcott; "The Gospel History," by Ebrard; "Our Lord's Divinity," by Liddon; "St. John's Gospel," by Outram; "Doctrine of the Person of Christ," by Dörner; Lange; &c., &c.

Subject: Advantages of attending Church.

"Afterward Jesus findeth him in the temple, and said unto him, Behold thou art made whole: sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee. The man departed, and told the Jews that it was Jesus which had made him whole."—John v. 14, 15.

EXPOSITION. *Ver. 14.*—"Afterward." The term would indicate that it was at some period subsequent to the healing of the "lame man."

recorded in the preceding verses. "*Jesus findeth him in the temple.*" Perhaps the physical recovery he had experienced led him to religious reflection and worship. The temple must have been a strange place to him, for he had been a paralytic for thirty-eight long years : there would be a sublimity in his impressions, and a freshness in his devotions. The temple was a fit place for the expression of a grateful heart. Hezekiah hastened to the temple to praise Jehovah for his recovery. Jesus resorted to the temple : and thus He sanctioned the ordinance of public worship. "*And said unto him, Behold thou art made whole.*" Christ recognised him, knew that his cure was complete, and declares it for his encouragement and gratitude. "*Sin no more ;*" language implying that his affliction was the fruit of some sin. Intemperance, impurity, inordinate passions, often afflict the body. "*Lest a worse thing come unto thee.*" Worse than thirty-eight years' suffering ! Then a moral relapse is a terrible thing. However great our sufferings may be there is something worse if we sin.

Ver. 15.—" *The man departed and told the Jews.*" The idea that some attach to this—that he went to the temple to betray his Benefactor as a Sabbath-breaker—is far too improbable to be entertained. His proclamation was dictated, no doubt, by a heart overflowing with gratitude. At the time he knew not the author of his restoration. "He that was healed wist not who it was." But now he is made aware of it, and declares his restorer. "He told the Jews *that it was Jesus which had made him whole.*"

HOMILETICS. We take this incident to illustrate the *advantage of attending church*. Whilst millions in this age and land neglect public worship altogether, those who attend to it are not sufficiently impressed with its obligations and advantages. Observe—

I. In the *temple* this man **MET WITH HIS MERCIFUL DELIVERER**. It was because he was in the temple Christ found him. Christ meets His disciples in public worship. He has promised to do so. "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." "In all places where I record my name, I will come unto thee, and will bless thee." This old promise has received millions of realizations in every age, and is still being fulfilled in all the true churches of Christendom every week.

"He likes the tents of Jacob well,
But still in Zion loves to dwell."

Now, is it nothing to meet with the Great Deliverer, to meet with One Who can dispel all ignorance, correct all errors, chase away all sorrows, forgive all sins, overcome all enemies, and fill the soul with joy unspeakable and full of glory?

II. In the *temple* this man RECEIVED DIVINE ADMONITIONS. Christ speaks to him and says, "Sin no more, lest a worse thing come upon you." What did he learn here? (1) That sin was the cause of his affliction. (2) That he was in danger of falling into sin again. (3) That if he fell into sin again he would be worse off than ever. There were solemn lessons, lessons of vital moment—lessons which every man needs to learn and ponder well. Such admonitions as these are addressed to congregations in every true church. Who but God can tell the advantage of having these things proclaimed, enforced, and reiterated Sunday after Sunday in England?

III. In the *temple* this man LEARNT HIS OBLIGATION TO CHRIST. "The man departed and told the Jews that it was Jesus which had made him whole." He did not know this until he went to the temple and met with Christ. In the House of God men learn their obligations to Him Who loved them, and gave Himself for their restoration.

"Spirit! whose life-sustaining presence fills
Air, ocean, central depths; by man untried,
Thou for Thy worshippers hast sanctified
All place, all time! The silence of the hills
Breathes veneration; founts and choral rills
Of thee are murmuring; to its inmost glade
The living forest with Thy whisper thrills;
And there is holiness on every shade.
Yet must the thoughtful soul of man invest
With dearer consecration those pure fances,
Which, sever'd from all sound of earth's unrest,
Hear naught but suppliant or adoring strains
Rise heavenward. No'er may rock or cave possess
Their claim on human hearts to solemn tenderness."

Mrs. Hemans

Germs of Thought.

Subject: Good Men in Prison.

"And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God : and the prisoners heard them. And suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken : and immediately all the doors were opened, and every one's bands were loosed."—Acts xvi. 25, 26.

IT is a great disgrace to humanity that its greatest benefactors have been ill-treated, beaten, cast into prison, and put to death. Next to the blessed Saviour, who is by reason of His divinity placed above all men, the world has known no truer benefactor than the Apostle Paul. His intellectual abilities were of a transcendent character. His writings have been the admiration of all men of moral worth. And all his powers were consecrated to this one work of blessing mankind. Society will not be able to calculate the amount of spiritual good which has resulted from this one man's holy and devoted life in this world. And yet he was cast into prison. Yea, many stripes were laid upon him. He was thrust into the inner prison, and his feet made fast in the stocks. We feel ashamed of our complaining as we think of this God's true hero cast into one of those damp, cold, and pestilential cells—such as we suppose them to be in the apostle's days—and uttering no word of complaint, but singing glad songs of praise unto the Lord. When my soul is cast down within me, and I think myself harshly treated, I will visit the dark dungeon in the province of Macedonia, where Paul and Silas were confined. Theirs was no mournful ditty. It was as cheerful as the song the angels sang at the birth of our world. It was as gladdening as the first light of day to the eyes of the weary watcher.

I. A great and good man radiates his influence. He cannot

help it. Influence is radiating. Every good man possesses an invisible power by which he touches, and blesses, and elevates his fellows. A great and good man will lift others up into that higher sphere in which he moves. He lifts them up, though he brings them not to the same level. He takes them to the mount, and while special glory is given to one, all declare "it is good to be here." Silas was benefited by his connection with Paul. Silas was a man of mark in the early Church; but he became more remarkable from the fact that he was so closely identified with the Apostle Paul. Tradition may place a mitre on the head of Silas, history gives him this nobler crown. His feet were placed in the same stocks, he sat in the same cell, as the great Apostle of the Gentiles. We may not get earthly greatness or riches, but we must be better in a moral sense by allowing ourselves to be touched by a good man's influence. "He that walketh with wise men shall be wise; but the companion of fools shall be destroyed." Paul exerted a beneficial influence on Silas even in a social aspect. Paul and Silas together exerted a good influence: on the prisoners, doubtless, who listened to the sweet singing at the silent midnight hour; on the jailor whom they rescued from death, and blessed with eternal life. It has been so ever since. Goodness uninfluential is impossible. "The path of the just is as the shining light." It is the property of light to shine, of flowers to bloom, of birds to sing, and of goodness to bless. And this property is not altered by outward conditions so long as life is left. A bird will sing in a cage; a preacher has spoken through the grating of his cell. "Paul and Silas prayed and sang praises unto God, and the prisoners heard them."

II. A good man's character is not damaged by outward conditions. A good man's reputation may be affected by his outward condition; for a man may have a good character, and a bad reputation. Paul and Silas had a bad reputation as they lay in the inner prison. It was not such a blasting thing to reputation to be cast into prison as it is in modern times. Could not something more be done to give the poor

liberated prisoner a chance to reform, and lead a new life? Is he to be always baffled in his endeavours by the hopeless motto, "Once a criminal, always a criminal"? But those prisoners at Macedonia were of a different class from those to whom we have now referred. They were sufferers for the truth's sake, that made a vast difference. That crowns them with glory. Their reputation might suffer for a little time. The jailor treated them harshly; the prisoners would follow suit, and scoff at the new comers. But a change is soon brought about. The very jailor acknowledges them as messengers of God, and washes their stripes. To-day the world delights to honour those two glorious men who sat in that gloomy cell. If we suffer as evil-doers we have reason to be ashamed; but if we suffer as Christians let us not be ashamed, but let us glorify God on this behalf.

III. Good men are true to their principles, though they have been the causes of disaster. If the world were morally right, correct principles would never bring a man into trouble. But it is not; and we believe that it was further from being right in the apostles' days than in our time. Their principles placed them in antagonism to a corrupt society; and society resents the action of reformers. If the apostles had been brought up in the school of worldly prudence, and had sat at the feet of Professors Pliable and Worldly Wiseman, they would not have had a sore back that night, though they might have had the worse evil of an uneasy conscience. But they were brought up in the school of Christ. The Great Teacher was their teacher. The lesson impressed upon their mind was, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and its righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you." It was theirs to dare to do the right, and leave consequences to shift for themselves. And they stuck to their principles in that distress of which they were seemingly the cause. They did not say, "Prayer and praise have brought us to this condition, and we are going to have no more of it." When Pliable gets into the Slough of Despond he gets out of the mire as speedily as possible on that side of the slough which is next to his own

house; but Christian aims at that side of the slough which is still farther from his own house, and next to the wicket-gate. Throw the mere professor into prison, and he soon recants. But when Paul and Silas are thrown into prison they pray and sing praises unto God. They do not change their mode of procedure. They rejoice in their sufferings. They bless God that they are counted worthy to suffer such great things for His name's sake.

IV. Good men are sustained and encouraged in their sufferings. The consciousness of having done right is a sustaining power. Sweet peace of conscience, it is better than plenty; it is sweeter than honey; it is a better treasure than the precious gold. It makes a prison cell more resplendent than the magnificent bedchamber of a palace. Paul and Silas had songs given to them in the night time of their confinement, while the poor jailor was in agonies, the masters who accused, and the magistrates who condemned, were sadly troubled in their souls. Let me make my bed with the righteous, though it be in a cell.

The consciousness of a helper in heaven is a sustaining power. Paul without prayer would have been Paul without his lofty heroism, without his noble deeds of self-sacrifice. Prayer nerved his arm for the conflict, and brought down heavenly blessings. Paul did not reason about the order of nature. He did not care about inevitable law. His faith laughed at the puny obstacles raised by modern wisecracks. He prayed, and disturbed the order of nature. An earthquake was the answer. If there were earthquakes in modern times as the result of prayer, the syllogisms of objectors would be swallowed up. If modern Christians were heard singing in prison instead of whining, the bands of moral prisoners would be more frequently loosed. Oh for men of prayer! Oh for the power of God to descend and shake the foundations of this world's prisons! Oh Holy Ghost, descend! The consciousness that the word of God cannot be bound is a sustaining power. If the apostles had felt that the gospel is hindered by our confinement, then their hearts would have been sad;

but stone walls cannot imprison the mighty gospel. Iron bars cannot cage up the sweet music of God's word. The messenger may be imprisoned, but the heavenly message pursues its glorious errand. God's purposes are mightier than human hindrances. Paul ever had faith in the ultimate triumph of the truth. Speed on, thou grand gospel; bless the nations. Silas has passed away; even Paul is dead; but the word for which they suffered still speaks to mankind. The attractive power of the cross is still felt. Hearts are being drawn by the preaching of Christ crucified. Let us evermore believe in the gospel. Amid temporary defeat and disaster let us comfort ourselves by the thought that the defeat is only seeming. Our defeats are God's times for victory. Our disasters are working out divine purposes.

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Subject: The Advantages of a Bad Harvest.

"The harvest of the field is perished."—Joel i. 11.

A BAD harvest. What do we mean? We speak comparatively. In every year there is a harvest. Still God's sign appears in the sky, and God's promise is fulfilled to His people. "While the earth remaineth" are the terms of the covenant (Gen. viii. 22). But there are differences; years of plenty and years of scarcity. With respect to ourselves, *the harvest may be called "bad" as compared with expectation.* The farmer has much toil and expense, calculates on a recompense. This year the early promise was good. Never were there prospects of richer crops. But disappointment came. Results were not equal to expectation.

"The ox hath therefore stretched his yoke in vain,
The ploughman lost his sweat; and the green corn
Hath rotted ere his youth attained a beard."—*Shakespeare.*

Again, *the harvest may be called "bad" as compared with the crops of former years.*

Old people can look back over a long tract of years. Fond of talking of what has been. Comparing one year with another, there are some that stand out from the rest. Disastrous. So this year. The grey-haired patriarch might well say:—

“Since I was man,
Such groans of roaring wind and rain I never
Remember to have heard.”—*Shakespeare*.

Further, the harvest may be called “*bad*” as compared with the harvests of other lands.

Earth wide. Differences as regards soil, climate, and productiveness. Land now linked to land. Hear in a day of what is taking place in the most distant parts of the world. While agriculturists, here, are toiling hard, and only save with difficulty a portion of the precious fruits of the earth, read of rich and abundant crops safely gathered in other lands.

It is common to speak of a “bad harvest” as if it were altogether evil. Deeper thought shows that it is not so. It has its uses. Under God’s benign providence, it is an instrument for good to men. Like all chastisement, it becomes a blessing to such as are “exercised thereby” (Heb. xii. 11). Let us mark some of the *advantages of a bad harvest*.

I. *Recalls us to a sense of our dependence upon God.*

In these days there is a growing tendency to exclude God from nature. Law is everything. This applies more especially to the harvest. If there are bad crops the farmer is blamed. If there are good crops, it is the result of skill, and resource, and diligence—man acting in harmony with law. But why forget God? What is *law* but *His will*? This evil has always prevailed under the sun. “But she did not know that I gave her corn” (Hosea ii. 8). “Neither say they in their heart, Let us now fear the Lord our God, that giveth rain, both the former and the latter in his season. He reserveth unto us the appointed weeks of the harvest” (Jer. v. 24). Adversity helps to cure this sore evil. What all goes well, it seems as if we could dispense with God. *But*

as if all were by, and through, and for ourselves. But when trouble comes, we are awakened from our dream. Do what men will, they cannot make sure of results. There are causes beyond their ken. There are influences at work which they cannot control. Science cannot say to the sun or the rain, "I have no need of thee." No, they are God's servants, and all we can say is, "Thy will be done." "Shall we receive good at the hand of the Lord, and shall we not receive evil?" (Job ii. 10).

II. *Awakens us to a deeper feeling of the evil of sin.*

Calamity witnesses for God against sin. Things are out of course. Disorder. Every pain, every sorrow, every disaster, is a call to repentance.

"Because ye have sinned against the Lord, and have not obeyed the voice of the Lord, nor walked in His ways, therefore this evil is happened unto you, as at this day" (Jer. xlv. 23). We may not be able to trace the connection between the sin and the penalty. Not necessary. Enough that there is sin; that ingratitude, worldliness, and manifold forms of iniquity abound. "Yea, all Israel have transgressed" (Dan. ix. 11). Calamity that touches you personally is a special call to you personally to repent. Calamity that affects a whole people is as the ringing of the great bell of Providence, summoning a whole nation to repent. "Because thou hast forgotten the God of thy salvation, and hast not been mindful of the Rock of thy strength; therefore shalt thou plant pleasant plants, and shalt set it with strange slips: in the day shalt thou make thy plant to grow, and in the morning shalt thou make thy seed to flourish; but the harvest shall be a heap in the day of grief and of desperate sorrow" (Isa. xvii. 10, 11). "God now commandeth all men everywhere to repent."

III. *Serves as a time of discipline for the improvement of character and the promotion of the general good.*

Calamity is fitted to humble us. Teaches patience. Stimulates thrift and economy. Quickens the inventive faculties. Moves the heart to a truer sympathy with the struggling and the poor. Develops trade and commerce and civilisation. There is now free-trade. What is lacking in one land may

be supplied from another. It was when Jacob's corn failed that he sent his sons to Egypt. What beneficent results followed. "All countries came to Joseph to buy corn" (Gen. xli. 57). So men run to and fro, on diverse errands, and knowledge is increased.

Commerce becomes a pioneer of the gospel. "Messengers go forth from me in ships" (Ezek. xxx. 9).

IV. *Impresses the soul with a sense of its higher needs and duties.*

In the record of God's dealings with Israel, in the wilderness, it is said (Deut. viii. 3), "And He humbled thee, and suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna, which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know." And why? The answer is ready: "That he might make thee know that man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord doth man live." This great lesson is always needful, and never more than in this grossly material age. "These things happened unto them for examples, and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come" (1 Cor. x. 11). There is a worse famine than that of bread (Amos viii. 11). There is a greater sin than the abusing of earthly mercies (John vi. 27—36; James ii. 15; 1 Tim. vi. 8—10; 1 Cor. 10—31).

V. *Invites us to draw nearer to God, and to regard Him as the only true and supreme God.*

If we believe on Christ, we should be brave and hopeful. Let the worst come to the worst, our highest interests are safe. In the most desperate straits we may rejoice in God. Like the old prophet, we may rise superior to all desolations and trials, and exultingly sing, "Although the fig-tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines: the labour of the olive shall fail and the fields shall yield no meat: the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls: yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation" (Habak. iii. 17, 18). "Let the people praise thee, O God; let all the people praise thee. Then shall the earth yield her increase; and God, even our own God, shall bless us" (Is. lxvii. 5, 6).

WILLIAM FORSYTH, M.A.

Subject : The Burden of the Righteous.

"Cast thy burden upon upon the Lord, and he shall sustain thee : he shall never suffer the righteous to be moved."—Psalm lv. 22.

I. *The righteous man.* Now there are three senses in which the word righteous may be understood.

First. In the absolute sense.

Absolute righteousness involves *sinlessness*. Where the slightest degree of moral imperfection exists, there can be no absolute righteousness. In this sense there is not a solitary righteous man on earth. For experience, observation, and Scripture, prove, in many things we offend all.

Secondly. In the comparative sense.

A man who fears God, and regards his fellow-men, is comparatively righteous. He is right so far as he is good. He is more righteous than he once was, and more righteous than some others now are. All our physical, intellectual, and moral attainments in this life are comparative attainments. We have not reached absolute perfection in anything as yet.

Thirdly. In the Scriptural sense.

By the righteous in the Scriptures is meant the godly—those who are believers in Christ, and are subjects of Divine Grace. The believer is infinitely superior to the strictest moralist. The moralist is righteous in his own eyes, the believer is righteous in the sight of God. He has been justified by faith. There is now no more condemnation for him. He is treated, for Christ's sake, as righteous. It is in this sense we understand the term righteous in the text.

II. *The trials of the righteous man.*

They are here called burdens. Now these burdens are of three kinds.

First. Those which the righteous man bears in common with all men.

Sickness, poverty, and bereavement befall the godly and the ungodly alike in this world. "One event happeneth to

them all." The laws of nature take no cognisance of character or of moral distinctions in the lives of men. Fire will burn, water will drown, poison will kill, disease will assail, and death will prevail against the righteous and the unrighteous in the same manner.

Secondly. He has burdens which are peculiar to the class to which he belongs.

There are trials which are peculiar to righteous men ; they are not experienced by others. The prevalence of sin in the world, the difficulties attending the diffusion of gospel truth, and the temptations which militate against a godly life, are burdens which all Christians are to bear in common.

Thirdly. Those which are restricted to him exclusively as an individual.

While the Christian has to bear burdens which are common to mankind, and those which are peculiar to the class to which he belongs, he has also burdens which none can know but himself. They belong to him as an *individual*. He has his individual hopes and fears, his individual strength and weakness, and his individual pleasures and sufferings.

III. *The duty of the righteous man in view of his trials.* "Cast thy burden on the Lord." This implies :

First. The possibility of relief.

The burden can be removed. This is true of all his burdens. There are beings in the universe who never had burdens ; these are the holy angels. There are others who have burdens, which will never be removed ; these are devils in hell. There are others again who have had burdens, but they have been entirely removed ; these are saints in heaven. And there are those who are suffering now beneath their burdens, but who can be relieved of them ; these are sinners on earth.

Secondly. There is but one way of obtaining this relief.

It is by casting it on the Lord. Some groan, and writhe, and struggle on, beneath their burdens, seeking no relief ; others endeavour to ignore their burdens, by plunging themselves into dissipation and sin ; others look in vain to men and to false systems for relief, while others again find blessed

relief by casting their burdens through faith upon the Lord. They can say, "I can do all things through Christ that helpeth me; I have learnt in whatever state I am therewith to be content." This is the only way of relief.

Thirdly. This one way of relief requires a personal effort.

Cast thy burden on the Lord. This is a duty which the burdened one must perform, and it is one that can be performed only by himself, and there can be no relief without performing this duty. There are some things that can be done by proxy, but the righteous must himself cast his burden on the Lord.

IV. *The encouragement which is given to the righteous man to cast his burden on the Lord.* "He shall never suffer the righteous to be removed." This indicates:

First. The Lord's ability to sustain him.

He can remove the burden of error through His revealed truth, the burden of guilt through pardon, the burden of pollution through the sanctifying influence of His Spirit, and the burden of affliction through restoring health, or giving grace to bear it.

Secondly. His willingness to sustain.

The invitation to cast thy burden upon Him implies this—He is a God of mercy.

Thirdly. He has made great arrangements to relieve man of his burden.

In His providence, in His word, in His church, and in the agency of His Holy Spirit. Then cast thy burden upon Him, O my soul, and He will sustain thee.

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The Chief Founders of the Chief Faiths.

Around no men, amongst all the millions of mankind, does so much interest gather as around the Founders of the Chief Religious Faiths of the world. Such men are sometimes almost lost in the obscurity of remote ages, or of the mystery with which they surrounded themselves, or their early followers invested them. But whenever they can be discerned, their characters analysed, and their deeper experiences understood, they are found to be not only leaders and masters of the multitudes who have adopted more or less of their creed and ritual, but also interpreters (more or less partial) of the universal yearnings of the soul of man. Such men may have seemed to sit at the fountains of human thought and feeling, and to have directed or have coloured the mysterious streams, but they have quite as often indicated in their doctrines and in their deeds the strong courses of the thoughts and feeling which are more permanent and deeper than any one man or even any one age could completely discover. The aim of these papers will be, with necessary brevity, to review the chief of such men, noting suggestively rather than exhaustively, their *biography*, their *circumstances*, their *theology*, and their *ethics*. And in concluding the series it is purposed to compare and to contrast each and all of them with the "One Man whom in the long roll of ages we can love without disappointment, and worship without idolatry, the Man Christ Jesus."

PRINCIPAL BOOKS OF REFERENCE. Max Müller's "History of Ancient Sanskrit Literature," "The Science of Language," "Chips from a German Workshop;" Rev. F. D. Maurice's "Religions of the World;" Archdeacon Hardwick's "Christ and other Masters;" Rev. J. W. Gardner's "Faiths of the World;" Miss Mary Carpenter's "Last Days of Rammohun Roy;" Rev. F. W. Farrar's "Witness of History to Christ;" Rev. A. W. Williamson's "Journey in North China;" Canon Liddon's Hampton Lecture on "Our Lord's Divinity;" Couain's "History of Modern Philosophy;" S. Clarke's "Ten Great Religions;" Father Hue's "Christianity in China."

No. IV.

CONFUCIUS.

(Continued from page 38.)

THEOLOGY.

ALTHOUGH Confucianism as it now exists has many of the elements of a theology, it had not in the mind of its founder or in the doctrines he himself promulgated. With him and his own teaching lies our present task. We have already seen that his early study and his latest labours were in connection with what were already, in his time, the ancient sacred books of China. His dealings with them were marked by great reverence. That, indeed, was a

distinguishing element in his constitution and character. And it is notable that this reverent man, this teacher of reverence, was distinguished by a prominent lump on that part of his head where phrenologists locate the organ of veneration. Dr. Legge tells us that it was in consequence of that remarkable formation that he was named Kew. That reverence was guided by what he conceived to be the doctrines of the accepted sacred literature. "My doctrine," he constantly declared, "is that which all men ought to follow. It is the doctrine of Yaou and of Shun. As for my way of teaching, it is perfectly simple. I cite the patterns left us by the ancients. I counsel men to read the sacred books (*king*), and I require them to form the habit of reflecting on the various maxims there preserved." Among those sacred traditions we may discover any concept of a personal God. But the few scanty notices which the writings of Confucius himself give of this central thought of any theology are scarcely recognitions of some powerful and indefinite Heaven (*T'ien*), which notion is not even clothed with any moral or spiritual attributes. When pressed to give any description or explanation of the object towards whom he would have human life and thought stand in the attitude of reverence, he evaded the inquiry and rebuked the prying spirit that he said was unconnected with the discharge of duties toward society, and that led into unfathomed and unfathomable depths. He urged and cultivated reverence, but it was reverence to the Unknowable.

Besides that, and apparently chiefly, his reverence was directed towards antiquity—what was "grey with years to him seemed godlike"—towards ancestors, towards propriety, and usage, and order, towards the State as parental, and the ruler as supreme. In all this he seems to have been honest, sincere, practical. He breathed the spirit of one of his own aphorisms, "Worship as though the Deity were present." Beyond this the "Shoo-king" which he edited taught how early emperors sacrificed to the spirits of the hills and rivers, as well as to the shining hosts of heaven. There is no evidence that Confucius accepted this as a duty in worship, but

clearly he was unable or unwilling to dialodge this deeply-rooted creed from the Chinese mind. Whilst, as we have said, he cultivated the spirit of worship towards his ancestors, we can scarcely omit noticing that by his followers he himself has been deified, so that the whole empire is dotted over with temples sacred to Confucius, where offerings and animal sacrifices are perpetually being devoted to his *manes*.

ETHICS.

We have already necessarily anticipated much of the moral principle that Confucius obeyed and taught. As we have said, the standard of his morality was to be found in the sacred books that had come down, not only to him, but to all the students of his land and time. "The heavenly maxims of a Yaou, the stern and simple virtues of a Shun, the perfect system of administration that had characterised the golden age of Yu, these all excited his unbounded admiration." They inspired him; his grand aim was to repeat them in himself and restore them to the nation. He said, "I cannot bear to hear myself called equal to the sages and the good. All that can be said of me is, that I study with delight the conduct of the sages, and instruct men without weariness therein." The whole gist of his theory of duty seemed to be, "Endeavour so to rule yourself, according to the sacred maxims, that you may be fitted first to rule a family, and lastly, may attain the highest object of ambition, an office under government." Scrupulous loyalty to the emperor; family affection and duty, personal humility, earnest search after knowledge, genuine reality in all the concerns of life, these seem to be the spirit of the maxims of his morality, a morality that had no system, and was constructed on no basis, but a morality that was energised by his own example, and that has exerted stupendous influence over the millions of the largest empire in the world.

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SHORT ESSAYS.

EGOTISM IN RELATION TO VANITY.

EGOTISM is often thought necessarily to imply vanity. Such seems to me to be a mistaken notion. A man may speak much of himself without being conceited. One person speaks much of himself from an exaggerated notion of his own importance. Another does so for the sake of giving expression to some mental or moral truth, which would be equally weighty if otherwise enounced; but which, having learnt it by introspection, he naturally associates with himself. Or his personal history may have been such as to prompt its frequent recital by him. Or he may feel that his friends have a right to know more of his character than they can ascertain without his voluntary aid. Now, both these persons are open to the charge of egotism, but only one to that of vanity. With the one, egotism is but the means to an end, with the other it is the end itself.

Egotism, however, proceeds sometimes from another cause, and *that* a worse one than vanity, just as it is more excusable to hold wrong notions, even if they lead, as they probably will, to wrong actions, than to know the right and yet not to practise it. Egotism may be nothing more nor less than an attempt to mislead. A man may be given to saying all imaginable good things of himself, just that others may think well of him, knowing himself, all the while, that he is simply lying. This is not vanity, it is too bad for that. The man is not the victim, but the cause of deception. Another reason; a man may say good things of himself and thus be egotistical, because other people unjustly decline to say good things of him. But he need not necessarily be vain to do this, for what he says may be true; though it is not, of course, for him to say it. The *propriety* of the thing is not now, however, under consideration, but only its vanity, or otherwise. Vanity, I understand, consists not in thinking one possesses good qualities which one *does* possess, but in thinking one possesses good qualities which one *does not* possess; and a thought which, unspoken, is not a vain one, cannot become vain by being uttered. Vanity, indeed, pertains to ideas, not to

words. True, it is only by the embodiment of ideas in speech or action that their existence is revealed; but the evidence of a thing is not the thing itself.

Assuming, then, that vanity is only one of many causes which lead to egotism, I proceed to state that, whenever the latter is resorted to for the purpose of expressing some philosophical truth, or for the narration of facts which are interesting in themselves, or, lastly, for conveying information respecting oneself, dictated by motives of friendship, egotism is perfectly justifiable. Nay, in two of the instances where I have indicated that it occurs, it should, I think, not merely be tolerated, but actually commended. A man, in speaking of the hidden things of the human mind, may certainly do so without particular reference to his own case, feeling assured that what, in this respect, is true of himself, will, for the most part, be true of others. But can he well leave out the mention of himself in a narrative of his own history? And if he could, would it not be undesirable, especially if he is one whom his hearers regard or admire? But it is egotism as between friend and friend that deserves special praise; upon which point, however, I need not enlarge; for, to the extent which it will be conceded that friendship involves interchange of thought, will it also be granted that interchange not only includes, but *is*, egotism, and little else?

INTELLECTUAL INDOLENCE.

The house of God seems to be looked upon by a great many people as a place of repose for both body and mind. The precept of the fourth commandment respecting the Sabbath: "In it thou shalt not do any work," they observe, indeed, in a sense in which it was never intended to be understood. They dare not even *think* on that day. As a rule, it will be found that the preacher who imposes the heaviest tax upon the attention of his hearers will have the fewest hearers to impose such a tax upon.

GRATITUDE TO ONESELF.

A friend of mine, who was remarkable for torturing people's minds, including his own, with metaphysical subtleties, once propounded in my presence this singular problem: "Why is it that a man never feels grateful to himself for any benefit which he may confer upon himself? He is, by turns, vexed with himself, and pleased with himself; but, if he purchase a valuable article, or perform an

important service for his personal advantage, he never, by any chance, considers himself under an obligation to his own generosity. Why is this?" The question of my friend seemed, at first, exceedingly puerile; but neither he nor I could for some time furnish a satisfactory answer to it. We saw at length, however, that a man never feels grateful to himself for any benefit which he may confer upon himself, for the sufficient reason that, strictly speaking, he cannot confer anything upon himself. The thing must be his before he can confer it. The money or the credit is his by which he purchases the article, and the power is his by which he performs the service.

THORNTON WELLS.

Biblical Criticism.

1 Cor. XV. 27, 28.

Πάντα γὰρ ὑπέταξεν ὑπὸ τοὺς πόδας αὐτοῦ ὅταν δὲ εἶπῃ ὅτι πάντα ὑποτάσσεται, δηλοῦν ὅτι ἐκτὸς τοῦ υποτάξαντος αὐτῷ τὰ πάντα : ὅταν δὲ ὑποταγῇ αὐτῷ τὰ πάντα, τότε καὶ αὐτὸς ὁ υἱὸς ὑποταγήσεται τῷ υποτάξαντι αὐτῷ τὰ πάντα ἵνα ᾗ ὁ θεὸς τὰ πάντα ἐν κῶσιν.

Ver. 27, "*Put.*" Namely, God and the Father. Compare put under, Eph. i. 22; Phil. iii. 21; Heb. ii. 8; 1 Peter iii. 22. He will put under, in his own time: he hath already put under, because he hath said it. "*All things.*" Death not excepted. The psalm (viii.) might appear by this syllable—all things—to indicate no more than the animals and the stars, which it names, but the apostle shows that it looks much further than that. Good things are made subject to him in the most flourishing condition: bad things in the sorriest plight. For the latter are destroyed and made a footstool. "*Under his feet.*" Are put—not his enemies only, but all other things (Eph. i. 22). There is a sort of synecdoche: all things are put under him: and those which resist and will not be put under, are simply hurled down at his feet to serve as his footstool. There is doubtless a distinction between

put under his feet and given into his hands. Still the former must not be understood too harshly: otherwise there would be no room for the exception of him who had subjected them. "*Saith.*" The prophet, Heb. ii. 6 (better as Alford renders: "But when God shall have declared that all things have been subjected to Him, it is evident that they have been subjected with the exception of Him who subjected all things to Him). "*Manifest.*" For the Father is not subjected to the Son, but (at, ver. 28) the Son to the Father. The consummation of all things is powerfully and wisely shown forth by the apostle from the psalm.

Ver. 28. "*Shall be subdued.*" So that they shall remain in subjection for ever. "*Then.*" At last. Before that there is ever a conflict with enemies to be carried on. "*The Son.*" Christ in both His natures, divine as well as human. We learn this not so much from His being here called the Son, as that He is expressly considered in relation to the Father. Nor, again, is the argument here concerned with the Son to prove that He and the Father are one, for this unity of essence is here assumed, but with the economy or arrangement according to which the Father has subjected all things to the Son. "*Himself*" (*αὐτός*, of His own will). Himself marks an antithesis to all things to denote the infinite excellence of the Son; and indicates, moreover, as often, something voluntary. For the Son subordinates Himself to the Father, and the Father glorifies the Son. The name of God, even the Father, and of the Son, is more glorious than king. This name originally flowed out of the other, and will finally be absorbed by it. "*Be subject;*" lit., subordinated, *υποτάξω*, which is improperly rendered by "shall be subject" in the English version. A word admirably adapted to denote things very widely differing. For the subordination of the Son to the Father is altogether a different thing from that of other created beings to God. The Son shall be subordinated to the Father as He had never been before. For in the mediatorial kingdom the brightness of the Son had been in some sense separated from the Father, but that ended, the Son

shall be wholly subordinate to the Father. This subordination, moreover, is to be entirely voluntary, desired by the Son Himself, and full of glory. For it is not as a servant (Heb. i. 14), but as a Son, that He will be subordinated. So, also, in human affairs, subordination belongs not only to subjects, but also to sons (Luke ii. 51; Heb. xiii. 9.) *ὑποτασσεται*, then, is not passive, but middle (*i.e.*, will subordinate Himself). My good, saith he, is not beside thee, O Jehovah (Ps. xvi. 2). The subjection and obédience of the Son to the Father take not away the equality of their power, nor prove a diversity of substance. The Son through all eternity acknowledges with the deepest reverence that He was begotten from eternity by the Father; He acknowledges, moreover, that He has received a spiritual kingdom from the Father, and is created Lord of the universe. This His most holy reverence, this subjection and filial love, He will show to the whole creation, that all honour may be ascribed to His eternal Father. But here is nothing derogatory to the Son, if in truth the Father would have all men honour the Son even as Himself. "*That God may be all in all.*" These words point to something which is at once new, comprehensive, and lasting. "*All things,*" and therefore all men, without any break, with no creature to assail, with no enemy to disturb them, shall be subordinate to the Son, and the Son to the Father. All things shall exclaim, God is all to us. This is the *τέλος*, the sum, this is the pinnacle and crown of all. Beyond this not even an apostle can go. As in Christ there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, bond nor free, but Christ is all, and in all (Col. iii. 11), so then there will be neither Greek nor Jew, &c., neither principality nor power, &c., but God shall be all in all. The ungodly in the world hold God for nothing (Ps. x. 4; xiv. 1), and with the saints there are many things which prevent Him from being all to them. But *then* He shall be all in all.

C. E. T.

The Preacher's Finger-Post.

Subject: AN UNWELCOME VISITOR.

"And Ahab said to Elijah, Hast thou found me, O mine enemy? And he answered, I have found thee; because thou hast sold thyself to work evil in the sight of the Lord."—1 Kings xxi. 20.

Shortly review the circumstances under which these words were spoken. The unsatisfied heart of King Ahab had for a long time coveted the fruitful vineyard of Naboth. All honest means to obtain it have failed. Now Jezebel is taken into the secret of her husband's disquiet, and manages by the most inhuman murder to calm the passionate yearning of his greed.

I. THE QUESTION OF AHAB.
"Hast thou found me, O mine enemy?"

1. *This question indicates past association*—"Thou." Ahab had frequently met with Elijah before: only in the previous chapter we find the Prophet and the King in most intimate relationships.

2. *The question indicates disquietude on the part of Ahab.* Directly the stately form of Elijah appeared to him, the greed, passion, and murder of the past few days crowded

in upon his memory. How happy that Christian man whose very presence strikes terror into the sinful heart!

3. *This question shows that criminal offenders often pass an incorrect judgment upon men who administer rebukes to them.* Ahab designates Elijah his enemy. What a mistake. Had not the prophet been the instrument of benefit to the king and his country? Had he not prayed on Mount Carmel that the drought might cease, and had he not worked at the same time for the extermination of idolatry? What more could he have done either for the temporal or spiritual welfare of his compeers? And yet for Ahab to call such a man an enemy, when he was in reality his truest friend! See the blinding power of covetousness.

4. *We gather from this question that the gratification of unholy desire never brings tranquillity.* Humanly speaking, Ahab was in the very height of success. He was a king—the long-desired vineyard had come into his possession. What is there to prevent enjoyment? Surely nothing. Yes; God vindicates the oppressed; and

though Naboth is dead, he is not lost sight of. Heaven will not permit so foul a deed to go unpunished. Hence the monarch's unrest.

II. THE RESPONSE OF ELIJAH. "I have found thee," &c.

1. *Elijah was divinely commissioned to seek Ahab.* "And the word of the Lord came to Elijah the Tishbite, saying, Arise, go down to meet Ahab, king of Israel, which is in Samaria: behold, he is in the vineyard of Naboth, whither he is gone down to possess it" (ver. 17, 18). How God pursues evil men with mercy! even punishment is but love speaking with more emphatic voice. Elijah was obedient to the expressed wish of God, he did not plead timidity at standing to rebuke a monarch, but went boldly and faithfully to perform his duty. What a happy pattern of a Christian minister!

2. *The reasons assigned for the search.* "I have found thee because thou hast sold thyself to work evil in the sight of the Lord." The prophet no doubt came to rebuke Ahab, and also to be instrumental in his reformation. The king must not be left without some effort for his restoration to purity of character. When ministers know that men have fallen into deep sin they should at once visit them to prevent further apostasy, and if possible to repair the past. In

doing this the prophet may meet with an unkindly greeting, but the ultimate issue will be good.

3. *How high social position is frequently degraded.* We find here that a king had sold himself to sin. Kings, of all men, should be righteous in their conduct, as their example must necessarily exercise a great influence upon the nation to which they belong. How fearful their responsibility! What a terrible bargain had Ahab made, "sold thyself to work evil!"

(1) *It was a voluntary bargain—"thyself."*

(2) *It was a mad bargain—"to work evil."* For how many lives would this be a fitting inscription! To work evil appears to be the life purpose of many around us. Think of the destiny to which this effort will lead you! Let the time past of our lives suffice in which we have wrought evil, &c.

JOSEPH S. EXELL.

Peterboro'.

Subject: THE CHRISTLY COMMUNITY.

"When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory."—Colossians iii. 4.

The whole generation of men existing on this earth to-day is made up of a vast number of communities. There is, for example, the mercantile community, the artisan

community, the professional community, the political community, the religious community, &c., &c. All these communities are capable of being divided into a vast number of sub-fellowships. The religious community, for example, embraces a large number of religions, churches, sects, &c. In that community there is one which is the "salt of the earth," the glory of the race, and that is the *Christly community*. It is highly important now to use the expression Christly community in preference to the term Christian Church. What is called the Christian Church is in many cases anything but Christly. The true Church is the Christly community, wherever it may exist. Now on this Christly community the text leads us to make two remarks:—

I. Christ is its "**LIFE**" **HERE**. He is our "**LIFE**." What does this mean? Nothing mystical. The paramount object of affection is always the life of an intelligent being. Whoever, or whatever, we love most, animates and controls us. The chief object of our love is,—

First: The chief *subject* of our *thought*. The intellect is ever more the servant of the heart. The heart forces the intellect to keep its chief love always before its eye. Love brings the distant and the dead into the chamber of

thought. The chief object of our love is,—

Secondly: The chief *object* of our *imitation*. By a law of mind we get transformed by the master object of our affections. Its spirit becomes our life, producing, shaping, and colouring all the branches and leaves of our conduct. Thus writers become like their favourite authors, artists like their favourite masters, and children morally like their parents. The chief object of our love is,—

Thirdly: The chief *spring* of our *activities*. The object we most love animates our activities and controls our efforts, is in truth the spring and sovereign of our daily lives. Now it is the characteristic of the Christly community that Christ is the object of their supreme affection, and hence He is the chief subject of thought, the chief object of imitation, and the chief spring of all activities. He is therefore in the truest and an intelligible sense, their "**life**." Life to them would be nothing without Him. Paul said, "I live, yet not I but Christ liveth in me." Of this community He is the root, they the branches. On this Christly community the text leads us to make another remark:—

II. Christ is its "**ALERT**" **HEREAFTER**. They have :s

future, and their future is a bright one.

First: They will appear "*with Him.*" Paul never argues the final advent of Christ, he assumes it, takes it for granted that his readers accept it as a settled article in their creed. Whilst he assumes the fact he does not specify the *time*. No date is fixed upon, that has been left to modern fanatics and impostors. "When?" "It is not for you to know the times and seasons," &c. But whenever it comes this community will "appear with Him." "Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so shall we ever be with the Lord." They will appear with Him from every land and age, every Christly spirit will gather around Him.

Secondly: They will appear "*with Him*" *in splendour*. "Then shall ye also appear with Him in glory." With what glory will He appear? "I beheld, and lo a great white throne." "He shall come in the glory of His Father and all His holy angels with Him," &c. Paul speaks of the glorious appearing of the Great God and our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Every Christly soul will participate in this glory, will bask in its rays. "He shall change our vile bodies that they may be

fashioned like unto His glorious one," says Paul. "When the chief shepherd shall appear ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away," says Peter. "When He shall appear we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is," says John.

CONCLUSION. Merciful Heaven, make us all members of this Christly community, and multiply that community throughout the earth!

Subject: THREE PORTRAITS.

"A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead. And by chance there came down a certain priest that way: and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. And likewise a Levite, when he was at the place, came and looked on him, and passed by on the other side. But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was: and when he saw him, he had compassion on him, and went to him and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him. And on the morrow when he departed, he took out two pence, and gave them to the host, and said unto him, Take care of him, and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again I will repay thee. Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbour unto him that fell among the thieves?" —Luke x. 30—36.

Elsewhere* a sketch of

* See HOMILIST, Series I., Vol. III., page 356.

ours will be found on this text. Here we have,—

I. A portrait of SUFFERING HUMANITY. "A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead."

First: This man was *robbed*. The thieves "stripped him of his raiment." Whatever he had valuable about him was in his raiment, and with his raiment they took away all. What millions in the world have been robbed and are the victims of thieves and oppressors who despoil them of their property, their freedom, their rights, reputation, &c. In a spiritual sense the whole human world has fallen amongst thieves—the ruthless brigands of hell who rifle it of its innocence, its freedom, and peace.

Secondly: This man was "*wounded*." What millions of men are being wounded, not merely in the body by the lash, the arrow, the bayonet, the sword, but in the heart, by false friendships and foul calumnies, &c. Spiritually all men are wounded in the soul.

Thirdly: This man was "*half dead*." "And departed, leaving him half dead." Half dead is worse than death itself: half death means pain, weakness, loss of power and pleasure. Verily, this

poor man going down from Jerusalem to Jericho is a picture of many who go down the roads of life. They are rifled, wounded, and all but killed. Here we have,—

II. A portrait of CONVENTIONAL RELIGIONISTS. "By chance there came down a certain priest that way: and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. And likewise a Levite, when he was at the place, came and looked on him, and passed by on the other side." Priests and Levites professed to be the especial ministers of the God of love, yet all philanthropy had gone out of their hearts. They "passed by on the other side." No doubt they talked a deal about love, and pity, and mercy, but with them mercy was all talk. Their religion had eaten out their humanity. A mere formal religion denaturalises the soul, freezes all the springs of social sympathy. A conventional church has always been more or less utterly indifferent to the material sufferings of humanity. They will give Bibles but withhold bread. Indeed, the Priests and Levites of conventional churches have often been among the chief thieves that have rifled, wounded, and all but crushed mankind. Of all the heartless things in a heartless world nothing is more heart-

less than a conventional church. Here we have,—

III. A portrait of a GENUINE PHILANTHROPIST. "But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was: and when he saw him, he had compassion on him, and went to him and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him. And on the morrow when he departed, he took out two pence and gave them to the host, and said unto him, Take care of him, and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again I will repay thee." Observe,—

First: The philanthropy of this Samaritan was *supernatural*. There is a philanthropy that could never overlook the boundaries of nationality. But this Samaritan comes to the rescue of a Jew. Genuine philanthropy overlooks all adventitious distinctions and fastens its sympathies on man as man. Observe,—

Secondly: The philanthropy of this Samaritan was *unsectarian*. There are men who confine their charity merely to those of their own sect, and feel little, if any, concern about those who are outside their pale. But this Samaritan helped the Jew, who belonged to a different religious sect. Observe,—

Thirdly: The philanthropy

of this Samaritan was *disinterested*. In helping the sufferer he did not look for praise, for there was no one to observe him. He exposed himself to peril, for he was in a desolate road—a road infested with ruffians and robbers. He risked accusation; he must have known that had any one passed him at the time and found him alone with the sufferer he would be liable to the suspicion of himself having injured the man. But his love made him self-forgetful, and utterly regardless of all risks. Observe,—

Fourthly: The philanthropy of this Samaritan was *practical*. He did not stand over the sufferer and spend his pity in sighs, tears, or words. "He bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine," &c. There was real work here. He took the responsibility of the man, raised the suffering frame from the dusty road, administered to it healing elements, set it on a beast to carry it on the road whither he was going, took him to the inn, and arranged for all necessary attendance to complete the recovery. Observe,—

Fifthly: The philanthropy of this Samaritan was *personal*. He did it himself, he did not go away to find someone else to help him. No, he himself "bound up the wounds."

Such is the philanthropy here portrayed, super-national, unsectarian, self-denying, practical, and personal.

Subject : THE TRUE MINISTRY.

"Since ye seek a proof of Christ speaking in me."—2 Cor. xiii. 3.

These words lead us to make two remarks concerning the true religious ministry.

I. A true ministry is THE ORGAN OF CHRIST. "Christ speaking in me." There is a high and intelligible sense in which Christ is in every true man, the *Logos* becomes flesh. "If a man love Me," says Christ, "he will keep my words, and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him and make our abode in him." Paul said, in referring to the commencement of his ministry, "It pleased God to reveal His Son in me," and afterwards he said, "Christ liveth in me." Christ speaketh in His true ministers in a far higher sense than the masters of philosophy, art, literature speak in their loving and loyal pupils. Christ dwells in His disciples in a higher sense than Plato or Aristotle, or any ancient or modern master of thought, ever did or will in theirs. In a higher sense than Calvin dwells in the Calvinist, or Wesley in the Wesleyans, or Moses in the Jews. Now a true minister, we say, is the organ of

Christ, not of *creeds*. His object is to set forth, not human opinions and theories, but Christ Himself, the living, loving Son of God, to manifest Him to men. The organ of Christ, not of *sects*. He has not to represent the little peculiarities that create denominations, form sects, and create divisions amongst the best men; but to represent Christ, the central light, the fountal life of all, the "way, the truth, the life." (1) Christ's Spirit is his controlling inspiration. "The love of Christ constraineth" him. (2) Christ's character is his standard of conduct. He judges all human efforts, doing, and enterprises by the character of Christ. What agrees not with that character he denounces, what harmonises he extols and enjoins. (3) Christ's biography is the substance of his teaching. The entire burden of his ministry is the story of Jesus. This is a true minister. A true minister is one in whom, not Luther, Calvin, Wesley speaketh, but one in whom Christ speaketh. Such a man says, "I am determined to know nothing amongst men but Christ, and Him crucified." His cry is, "Behold the Lamb of God," &c., &c.

II. A true ministry *MUST* PROVE ITSELF THE ORGAN OF CHRIST. "A proof of Christ speaking in me." What is called the Christian ministry has,

in the vast majority of cases, failed, signally failed, in furnishing the world with this "proof." They have furnished the world with "proof" that bigotry speaks in them, worldliness speaks in them, dogmatism speaks in them, cold arrogant officialism speaks in them; but a "proof" that Christ speaks in them is what the world urgently demands. What is the "proof"?

First: That the minister's *character* shall agree with the *character* of Christ. Unselfish, self-sacrificing, profoundly reverent, and practically philanthropic. Secondly: That the minister's *message* shall agree with the *message* of Christ. Christ came not to destroy men's lives, but to save them—not to save a class, but the wide world.

CONCLUSION. This is the ministry the world wants; it is tired of all other ministries, it is turning away from them with a loathing. Oh, come the time when the pulpits of Christendom shall be filled with men in whom Christ is speaking, in all the purity of His teaching, in all the tenderness of His love, in all the breadth and might of His philanthropy.

Subject: MAN IN HEAVEN ON AN EQUALITY WITH ANGELS.

"They are equal unto the angels."—Luke xx. 36.

Christ, in the context, points

to the condition of man in heaven. (Explain occasion of the words.) At the outset the question meets us, What are the angels? They are very *holy*. They are called "holy angels." They retain their pristine purity, and are deeply interested in the restoration of purity in man. They rejoice over the repentance of sinners. They are very *intelligent*. They are represented as being "full of eyes." Though as finite creatures they cannot see all things, their vision is wide and clear, their knowledge, so far as it goes, is correct. They are very *powerful*. They are called "mighty angels." Wonderful feats of power are ascribed to them in the Scriptures. They are God's agents in moving the mighty wheels in the grand machine of His universal government. They are very *swift*. They are represented as having wings: the flight of angels time counts not. They are very *dignified*. They stand before the face of their Father. They are His elder sons, His prime ministers. They are very *happy*. They are full of joy. Their language is that of song. Now is it meant that human souls in heaven will be equal with the angels in these respects? We think so. They will be very holy, very intelligent, very powerful, very swift, very dignified, very happy.

From this fact the following subjects are suggested:—

I. THE VAST POSSIBILITIES OF HUMAN NATURE. Poor humanity seems base enough here, polluted, ignorant, weak, miserable, and degraded. Its aspect sometimes saddens our hearts and makes us ashamed of our nature. Albeit, in the most degraded there slumbers the germs of angelic powers. The human soul, in truth, even in its basest condition, is an angel whose eyes are dimmed, whose pinions are crippled, and whose plumage is stained with the filth of depravity. We see even here oftentimes bright angels rising out of humanity. Another suggestion here is,—

II. THE INFINITE WORTH OF CHRIST'S MEDIATION. What can awaken, raise, and develop the angelic nature in man? Philosophy, science, law, art? No, these have tried a thousand times, and failed. This is the exclusive work of the gospel. The gospel has done it, is doing it, and will continue to do it until the end of time. Its sublime work is to bring out the angel from the pollution and thralldom of animalism into the light of intelligence and purity, and set it on the free wing of duty and devotion. Another suggestion here is,—

III. THE MAGNIFICENT PROSPECT OF CHRISTLY MEN. Genuine disciples of Christ

are often the subjects of great sorrows and trials here, but what awaits them? Equality with the angels. As the eagle, when driven down to the earth by tempests, keeps its wings expanded, watches for the first gleam of sunshine, and then towers away, so let Godly souls, while down on this earth, keep their eyes on heaven, and hail the time for flight. Another suggestion here is,—

IV. THE SUPREME WORK OF THIS LIFE. What is the great work on which it behoves every man to concentrate his every power? (1) The developing of the angel in his own breast. (2) The developing of it in the breasts of others. Let this be our chief work. Let all other labours, whether manual or mental, be subordinated to this, and then one day we shall find ourselves, and many of our contemporaries, in scenes where we shall be "equal unto the angels." "And I beheld and heard the voice of many angels round about the throne, and the living ones and the elders, and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands saying with a loud voice, *Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing.*"

Seeds of Sermons from the Minor Prophets.

If the Bible as a whole is inspired, it is of vast importance that all its Divine ideas should be brought to bear upon the living world of men. Though the pulpit is the organ Divinely intended for this work, it has been doing it hitherto in a miserably partial and restricted method. It selects isolated passages, and leaves whole chapters and books for the most part untouched. Its conduct to the Minor Prophets may be taken as a case in point. How seldom are they resorted to for texts, and yet they abound with splendid passages throbbing with Divine ideas. It is our purpose to go through this section of the Holy Word; selecting, however, only such verses in each chapter and book as seem the most suggestive of truths, of the most vital interest, and universal application.

We begin with HOSEA. The remembrance of some facts connected with this man will greatly help us in our endeavours to reach the meaning and feel the power of certain of his utterances. He was a native of Israel, and lived in Samaria about 700 or 800 years B.C. His prophecy seems to have embraced a period of about 60 years, from Jeroboam's death to Hezekiah's ascension to the throne. He was contemporary with Isaiah, and preceded Joel, Jonah, and Amos. His prophecies are directed almost exclusively to the ten tribes who had sunk into the deepest idolatry. His style, as a writer, is very peculiar. "It is," says De Witte, "abrupt, unrounded, and ebullient, his rhythm hard, leaping, and violent." Like a bee he has been said to fly from one flower to another, to suck the honey from all the blossoms.

HOSEA.

No. XXIV.


Subject: THE ABANDONMENT OF GOOD, AND THE CONSEQUENT PURSUIT OF EVIL.

"Israel hath cast off the thing that is good: the enemy shall pursue him. They have set up kings, but not by me; they have made princes, and I knew it not: of their silver and their gold have they made them idols, that they may be cut off."—Hosea viii. 3, 4.

Two things are contained in these verses:—

I. THE ABANDONMENT OF GOOD. "Israel hath rejected what is good" (*Elzas*). The good here undoubtedly refers to the true worship of the true God. Observe,—First: That true worship is the "*good thing*"

for man. It is good not only because God requires it, but because it is the necessary condition of spiritual life, growth, harmony, and blessedness. True worship is the soul's only heaven. Secondly: That this "*good thing*" man sometimes abandons. Israel was once a true worshipper, but the true worship it had now "*cast off*." Fallen angels were once true worshippers, and many a human spirit once inspired with true devotion has fallen into worldliness and idolatry. Moral mind has the power of abandoning the highest good. Thirdly: That the abandonment of this "*good thing*" imperils the soul. "The enemy shall pursue him." Moral good is the only effective safeguard of the spirit; when this is given



the setting up of kings, here, refers to the founding of the kingdom by Jeroboam, and to the entire series of Israelitish kings. The kings of Israel were not according to Divine ordination (1 Kings .xi. 27—40). "Their silver and their gold have they made them idols, that they may be cut off." From these kings of their own making came the setting up of the idolatrous calf - worship which was started by Jereboam. Though silver was not used in the construction of the golden calves, it was employed to support the idolatrous worship.

Thus, because they abandoned the "good thing" they went wrong in their politics and religion. They made their own kings and their own gods. When once men give up the right they rush into the wrong. Let a man go wrong in relation to God, and he will go wrong in all his relations, secular and spiritual.

CONCLUSION. There is nothing in connection with "

of the gross idolatries practised by the Phœnicians, Syrians, and Chaldeans." Now, against this idolatry Jehovah declares His anger "to be kindled." The language is, of course, anthropopathic, and used only to express His unconquerable opposition to idolatry,—the foulest of all evils,—a violation of His command, "Thou shalt have no other God beside me." It is the abominable thing which He hates. The fact that idolatry is abhorrent to the Great God is the grand reason why His loyal servants should consecrate themselves to His service. The verses present idolatry to us,—

II. AS ANTAGONISTIC TO MORAL PURITY. "How long shall they be incapable of purity" (*Elzas*). Where there is not supreme love to the Supreme Good there is no soil in which one solitary virtue can germinate, there is no foundation on which one stone can be laid for the temple of goodness. Hence, the history of idolatry shows that it is inseparably associated with pollution and crime. Idolatry is a fountain essentially corrupt, and all its streams are filthy and foul. Paul's description in the first chapter of Romans is true to universal fact. If the world is ever to be made virtuous it must have the One true and living God presented to it as the one object of supreme love and worship. The verses present idolatry to us,—

III. AS AN OUTRAGE ON REASON. "For from Israel was it also: the workman made it; therefore it is not God." "It is the greatest folly," says an

old author, "to look upon that which derives its excellency from ourselves as superior to us, and that in the highest degree; to forsake God that made us, and to make that to be a god unto us that we have made ourselves. If one be maintained or raised by another, he is expected to be serviceable to him. In this relation we stand to God, but idolatry makes men go against the very principles of reason. They fashion the idol, and yet account it their God; they are made and sustained by God, and yet forget Him." And yet this folly men are constantly committing every day, not only in heathen lands, but in Christendom. Men are everywhere making their gods. *Power, money, pleasure, fame*, these be thy gods, O England! The verses present idolatry to us,—

IV. AS DOOMED TO DESTRUCTION. "But the calf of Samaria shall be broken in pieces." "All idolatry must be destroyed" (Exod. xxxiv. 13; Deuteronomy vii. 5; Ezekiel xx. 7).

First: *God has destroyed idols by the gospel.* Secondly: *God is destroying idols by the gospel.* Thirdly: *God will one day destroy all idols by the gospel.* "As I live, saith the Lord, all the earth shall be filled with my glory." "In that day a man shall cast his idols of silver, and his idols of gold which they made each one for himself to worship, to the moles and to the bats: to go into the clefts of the rocks, and into the tops of the ragged rocks, for fear of the Lord, and for the glory of

his majesty when he ariseth to shake terribly the earth." These verses present idolatry to us,—

V. AS PRODUCTIVE OF GREAT EVIL. "They have sown the wind and they shall reap the whirlwind," &c. "As the husbandman reaps the same kind of grain which he has sown, but in far greater abundance, so he who sows the wind shall have whirlwind to reap." "It hath no stalk." Nothing that can yield a blossom. "The bud shall yield no meal." "If they should have a stalk, and that stalk should have a blossom, that blossom shall yield no fruit, and if there be fruit the sower shall not enjoy it, for strangers shall eat it. The Israelites should be unsuccessful in all their undertakings, and whatever partial gains they might acquire would be eagerly seized by the Assyrians."—*Elzas*. (1) All men are sowing. Every human act is a seed. (2) Some are sowing worthless seed. "Wind." The worldling, the man of pleasure, the conventional religionist, the speculative sceptic, are all "sowing the wind." (3) The more worthless the seed sown, the more terrible the reaping. "Reap the whirlwind." Great is the power of the whirlwind. The Scripture describes it as very great. In 1 Kings xix. 11, it "rent the mountains and brake in pieces the rocks." Sabelicos reports that Cambyses' soldiers being at dinner in a sandy place, there arose a whirlwind and drove the sand upon them, so that it covered them all. "Whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap."

"Hear, Father! hear and aid!
If I have loved too well, if I have shed
In my vain fondness, o'er a mortal head,
Gifts, on Thy shrine, my God,
more fitly laid;
If I have sought to live
But in one light, and made a mortal eye
The lonely star of my idolatry.
Thou that art Love, oh, pity and forgive.—*Mrs. Hemans*.

NO. XXVI.

SUBJECT: PERVERSION OF WORSHIP.

"Because Ephraim hath made many altars to sin, altars shall be unto him to sin. I have written to him the great things of my law, but they were counted as a strange thing."—*Hosea viii. 11, 12*.

Israel was to have only one altar, and that in the place where the Lord would reveal His name (*Deut. xii. 5*). But instead of that, Ephraim had built a number of altars in different places to multiply the sin of idolatry, and thereby heap more and more guilt upon itself.—*Delitzsch*. The passage leads us to notice the *perversion of worship*. This is one of the oldest, the most prevalent, and the most baneful sins amongst mankind. Men have perverted worship, not only by making false gods, but by making false altars for the true God. There is only one altar in true worship, and that altar is Christ (*see Heb. xiii. 10*). The text leads us to make two remarks in relation to false worship.

I. It is a GREAT sin. First: It is a very propagative sin. "Ephraim hath made many

altars." "If men leave the rule," says an old author, "they know not where to stay, hence the multiplying of things thus amongst the Papists, five hundred altars in some one temple." How sublimely antagonistic the Jews were to the introduction of any altar but one (Joshua xxii. 11), but now they had "many." Once admit a wrong thing in worship, and that one thing will multiply itself; superstition will give it fertility. The Romish Church is a sad illustration of this, and the Anglican Church in some sections is multiplying examples.

Secondly: It is a *self-punishing* sin. "Altars shall be unto him to sin." The idea, probably, is, "As you have gone on persisting to multiply altars contrary to my will, I will let you alone, you shall go on, your altars shall be a sin to you." "That is, thus seeing they will have them, they shall have them; they shall have enough of them, let them go on in their way, let them multiply their sin. They keep a great deal of stir for it, and have it they must; they refuse to see the light, they are prejudiced against the way of God's worship; let them have their desires; let them have, saith God, governors to establish by their authority, and teachers to defend by subtle arguments what they wish for; they multiply altars to sin, and they shall be to sin, even to harden them; their hearts are set upon them, and they will have them, and love them, and they shall be hardened in them. This is the heavy judgment of God, to give men their hearts' desire in

what is evil. And as it shall be to them for sin, so it shall be to them for misery, the fruit of sin; for so sin is taken very frequently in Scripture for the fruit of sin; they will have them to sin, and they shall find in them the fruit of sin, misery."

II. It is a sin against GREAT LIGHT. "I have written to him the great things of my law, but they were counted as a strange thing." They could not say they sinned in ignorance. God gave them directions most concise and abundant concerning the nature and object of true worship. Some translate the words, "I may prescribe my laws to them by myriads, they will treat it as a strange thing."

First: *God has given us laws concerning worship.*

Secondly: Those laws are *oft-repeated*. By myriads or by thousands. We have "line upon line" and "precept upon precept."

Thirdly: These oft-repeated laws leave *false worshippers without excuse.*

NO. XXVII.

Subject: NEITHER THE RELIGION NOR SECURITY OF A NATION TO BE JUDGED BY APPEARANCES.

"For Israel hath forgotten his Maker, and buildeth temples; and Judah hath multiplied fenced cities: but I will send a fire upon his cities, and it shall devour the palaces thereof."—Hosea viii. 14.

The "temples" referred to here are the idolatrous temples which Israel had built after the models of those built by the Syro-Phoenicians; and the

"fenced cities" refer to those fortified places which they had erected against foreign invaders. The words imply that neither the temples nor the "fenced cities" were any proof either of their religion or their security.

I. *The multiplication of temples is no infallible proof of the growth of religion in a country.* Temples were now multiplied in Israel. And the reason assigned is forgetfulness of their Maker. When strangers visit England and witness the number of our churches of all sects, and measures of beauty and size, their first impression would be, What a religious people these English are! but when we think of the moral causes that often lead to the erection of temples, they rather prove our forgetfulness of God. (1) There is greed. Churches are sometimes built as an investment. (2) There is spite. One or two, or more, have received a grievance at

the neighbouring church, and inspired by spite, they set to the erection of another one. (3) There is sectism. Episcopalians, Wesleyans, Congregationalists, all seek to rival each other in this respect; so that the multiplication of temples, we fear, must not be taken as a proof of the growth of religion.

II. *The increase of national defences is no proof of the increase of national security.* "I will send a fire upon his cities." When noble foreigners visit our shores, we, with our national vanity, seek to impress them with the greatness of our national defences. We exhibit our fleets, our standing armies, our fortifications; we have our naval and military reviews. What fools are they who think that national security is in these things! The safety of a people is in the moral excellence of their character and the guardianship of Heaven.

The Pulpit and its Handmaids.

ORIGINAL SIMILITUDES.

BOOKS.—A book is a kind of ark that bears down to us over the floods of centuries, the seeds of a new world; or, to change the figure, it is a body in which the spirit of the writer lives long after his material frame has crumbled to dust;—a body in which he works longer and often far more efficiently than he did before his departure."

THE SOUL.—"The soul should not be like the seed tossed about in the breeze, but like the rooted plant, fixed in the soil, and striking deep its roots; it should not be like the lake, heaving to and fro with every wind; but like the river, rolling to a definite shore, and gathering fresh volume and force, as it sweeps along to the ocean."

SILENCE.—"Silence is a better expression of deep sympathy than speech."

SIN.—"Every sin you commit is like a drop of poison that descends into that stream of influence that will roll through all future times; is a breath of pestilence sent into that atmosphere which shall heave the lungs of coming generations."

CHRIST'S DEATH.—"Christ's death fell on the universe as the pebble in the centre of a lake, widening in circles of influence on to its utmost boundary."

"**SIN** is no more a part of human nature than dirt on a garment. It can be washed off."

THE MORAL END OF CREATION.—"The growth, development, and perfection of divine knowledge and true holiness in God's spiritual offspring, constitute the highest end of the creation."

IDEAS.—"The ideas of the brain, however brilliant, serve us not, unless they act as the genial beams of heaven upon the moral heart, quickening the affections into supreme sympathy with the supremely good."

LOVE.—"The whole history of our race is traceable to love—good or bad, according to its objects and measure."

MARKS OF FRIENDSHIP.—"If we are friends of God we shall delight to think of Him. How the heart makes the intellect dwell upon the object of its affections! Should oceans roll between us and our friends, thought will bear them to our bosom on its rapid wing. Or

should even death part us, thought will bring them from their graves, and press them with all the warmth of life to our hearts."

THE HUMAN FACE.—"The face is the soul's dial plate. It notifies all the revolutions of the heart. Thoughts chisel their likeness on the brow; emotions throw their glare into the eye; passions paint their hues upon the face."

THE GODLY MAN.—"The godly man will be as firm in the tempest as a well-rooted oak; as calm amidst the billows of life, as the rock that only breaks into pieces its surging assailants."

"**THE** life of a godly man is like a river, not like a stagnant pool or a dead sea. It is ever in motion, sometimes sparkling in the sunbeam, and sometimes shivering in the clouds; sometimes chanting through scenery as beautiful as Eden, and sometimes moaning through districts of miserable desolation; sometimes clear as the day, and sometimes black as the night. Still, it is ever moving on to its ocean destiny: progress is its law; infinitude is its home."

THE GOOD MAN'S TRIALS.—"Never will the sorrows of a good man return; they are gone for ever. Flow on, then, thou stream of life, and bear away our trials! Thou wilt get clearer, deeper, and calmer as thou nearest the blue, broad, boundless sea of eternity."

"**LOVE** is a nightingale in the universe; in its waves of melody every leaf quivers,

every insect sports, every planet rolls, and every seraph sings. List to the melody, and be charmed away from self and sect."

MENTAL MONUMENTS.—"The good man rears a monument in the souls of others, more lasting, far, than the huge pyramids of the Nile."

RESURRECTION.—"The most solemn resurrection of all is the resurrection of buried thought."

THE TEACHER.—"The truest men must always die to give vitality and power to their teaching."

WEAKNESS OF WORDS.—"The tongue can never speak the deepest and divinest things in man; and hence, nature, with wisdom, and with justice, holds it, when the soul overflows either with the greatest sorrow or the greatest joy. Much feeling makes us mute."

GRATITUDE.—"Holy gratitude is a wing that bears the soul aloft to its benefactor."

DISTINCTIONS. -- "Worldly distinctions are mere wrappings, nothing more. The grandest of them is often only the gaudy costume of spirit-serfs. Moral royalties often walk the earth in rags."

AFFLICTION.—"Like the pruning-knife of the gardener, affliction cuts away those false dependencies of the soul, which, like the suckers in a tree, weaken its fruit-bearing power."

BEAUTY.—"Beauty is everywhere; it shines in the stars, it blooms in the meadows, it sparkles in the brook, it smiles

in pearls of the ocean, and glitters in the gems of the hills."

THE GOOD MUST SPEAK.—"Truth has an instinct that struggles evermore for utterance."

"MAN's intellect looks at God through his fear of Him, and therefore pictures a Deity not true either to the teachings of nature or the gospel."

"THERE is no power man can wield so mighty as that of genuine tears."

MATTER.—"Matter has no power to imprison mind; chains of adamant cannot manacle the soul."

WORK.—"Work of whatever kind, if rightly rendered, is the best teacher of knowledge and trainer of virtue."

IDEAS.—"Men are made to be governed by their ideas, their conduct should be the effect and exponent of their creed; and where the creed is *really* believed and not merely nominally held, this is ever the case."

PROGRESS.—"The path of true greatness is not that over which the Cæsars in proud daring rode; but that over which, with humble mien and world-wide love, the Howards pursued their self-denying course. Its mission is to minister, not to master; to give, not to govern."

"HUMAN labour, like a mighty engine, is in rapid work, but the time hastens on when every wheel shall stop."

RETICENCE.—"The soul in deep sorrow recoils from talk, shrinks from words, as the delicate flower from a cold night breeze."

"A RIGHT principle dignifies the most menial services, and sanctifies the most sensuous and secular."

"It is better, a thousand times better, to have the disposition to give and not the means, than to have the means and not the disposition. He who has the one is a pauper in the universe; he who has the other, a prince. The one is a grub worming through his earthly possessions; the other a seraph, on joyous pinion winging his way through regions as rich as love, as beautiful as Paradise, as vast as immensity, as blessed as God."

"HYPOCRISY is sin in its worst form; it is sin becoming too hideous to show itself; sin stealing the garb of virtue, and thus daring to impose upon the credulousness of men, and to insult the omniscience of heaven."

THE LANGUAGE OF THE HEART.—"The tearful look, the quivering lip, the heaving breast, the warm grasp, the convulsive embrace, the sombre air that seems to clothe the whole being as with a mystic mantle, are the modes by which the heart speaks out its profoundest things."

"THERE is not, in all likelihood, a mind in the creation, however feeble its power and humble its sphere, that cannot do a certain admirable something, which no other could so well achieve."

"THE conscience of a devil is bound to kneel in reverence before goodness as it gleams in the life of a little child."

"ALL the glories of earth break as bubbles and are gone for ever, the moment they touch the cold shores of mortality."

"THERE will be no monotony in the services of eternity. All will be fresh as the morning."

"SENSIBILITY feathers the arrows of argument, gives poetry and power to thought."

LIFE.—"We are shadows, and following shadows; there is nothing real but God."

"EVERY moral evil drags after it a Divine woe."

"INASMUCH as our strongest hopes imply our strongest likes and loves, they are, without a figure, our very soul-life."

"DOING the right is the condition of power."

"TRUE sovereignty is throned in the people's soul."

ROOTS OF LIFE.—The roots of our earthly life, such as they are, are only like those of certain marine plants, that spring up from one floating wavelet to be destroyed by the next; or rather like the roots of those atmospheric plants, of which I have somewhere read, that strike only into a wave of air that rolls swiftly on Heaven only knows where."

RETRIBUTION.—"Heaven's plan of judgment, as well as mercy, is *gradual*. As to-night the sun of our to-morrow is on its way to our horizon, and none can keep it back or arrest for one moment its progress; so the great orb that shall light up the last judgment is on its march. It may be as distant from us as the most distant comet, yet still it is on its way."

and will one day flood these heavens with supernatural brightness."

WORSHIP.—"Worship is the vital air and sunbeam of the soul; worship is the highest end of our being; it is not the means to a higher end, there is no higher end for creature spirits: worship is not the way to Heaven; it is Heaven; and nothing else is Heaven."

THE NATURE OF LOVE.—"It is the essence of true love to sacrifice *all* to its object."

CAPACITY is the measure of obligation."

TRUTH does not depend upon numbers."

A MAN'S power of observation is only equal to his intellectual and moral elevation."

PIETY.—"True piety buries the soul in the Infinite."

PERFECTION.—"The perfection of our being is yonder, not here; hereafter, not now. This is the dim dawn, the bright day is there."

HEART VEILS.—"From their own hearts men weave the veil which hides from them the gospel."

CONDUCT THE EXPRESSION OF LIFE.—Heaven intended that our outward conduct should be the expression of our inner selves, that our looks, words, and deeds, should be as true to our hearts as the plant is to the seed from which it springs, and as the river is to the fountain from which it flows."

DEATH.—"The death of every good man is the drying up of a refreshing fountain in our desert, the quenching of a guiding star in our firmament."

THE life of a good man adds to the world's responsibility."

THOUGHT.—"When a man speaks a thought to the world he can never call it back; it originates a series of operations that will never end; in some form or other it will be working in the mind of the world ages after the tongue that spoke it, or the ear that heard it shall have crumbled to dust."

Homiletical Breviaries.

No. LXXIV.

Subject: MEMORABLE WORDS REMEMBERED.

"And they remembered his words."—Luke xxiv. 8.

Here is—I. MEMORABLE WORDS. "*His words.*" No words like His. His words are, First: *The representatives of the greatest realities.* Most of the words of men represent either *un-realities* or

trivial realities, things not worth representing. His words represent deathless spirits, immutable law, Himself, the Great God, eternity. His words are, Secondly: *The channels of the highest influence.* Human words are often the channels of profanities, inanities, in chastities, &c., &c. Through His words there rolls that eternal river of life that quickens, nourishes, beautifies, and blesses the moral universe. His words are, Thirdly: *The weapons of the highest victories.* The highest victories in the universe are victories over sin, error, misery. Christ's word is that sword of the spirit by which the most splendid victories can alone be won. Here is—II. Memorable words "REMEMBERED." "And they remembered His words." Two things are necessary properly to remember the words of Christ. First: *A correct knowledge* of them. We can never remember what we have not known. Memory never touches the vast regions lying outside our intelligence. It would be absurd to ask heathens to remember the words of Christ. Secondly: *A vital interest* in them. We do not remember things in which we have no interest. They roll over our minds as shadows over the hills. We never forget what we feel a vital interest in. If the words of Christ awaken our highest gratitude, our strongest love and sublimest hope, as they ever should, then, and not till then, shall we rightly remember His memorable words.

No. LXXV.

Subject: THE WEARY WORLD AND THE REFRESHING MINISTRY.

"The Lord God hath given me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary."—Isaiah l. 4.

I. The WEARY WORLD. "Him that is weary." It is not one man that is weary, the generation is weary, the world is weary. All sinners are weary. (1) Wearied with fruitless efforts after happiness. (2) Wearied with the varied cares of life. (3) Wearied with the heavy load of guilt. Sin is a wearying, exhausting business. There is the *ennui* yawn, and the groan of depression heard everywhere. II. The REFRESHING MINISTRY. "The Lord God hath given me the tongue of the learned," &c. (1) The *relief comes by speech*. It is by the "tongue." No physical, legislative, or ceremonial means will do, it must be by the tongue, the living voice, charged with sympathy, truth, light. (2) The effective

"We know that we are of God, and
ness."—1 John v. 19.

There are two distinct moral classes of God and the children of the devil. In the days of John the former class was the latter. "We are of God," only a few in the world—"lieth in wickedness." At the present time the great majority of the world are of God. First: Their *relation to God*. "We are of God." What does it mean? (1) We are of His family. We are His loving, loyal children. We are being taught of God. As the Father "makes us meet," &c. (3) We are to love Him, all must serve Him; but we must love Him lovingly. Secondly: Their *consciousness*. "We know." How do we know it? Not by reason, but by consciousness. Every man has a governing disposition. What a blessing is it "that we are of God." II. The world lieth in wickedness." A moral man would be, "lieth in the wicked one" as in the preceding verse. "The world is of mankind. Lieth in the wicked one, his influence. "Lieth."

No. LXXVII.

Subject: THE SUBLIMEST HUMAN DISTINCTION.

"Having His father's name written in their foreheads."—Rev. xiv. 1.

Men glory in things that are supposed to distinguish them advantageously from their fellow-men—the attractions of physical beauty, the glitter of wealth, the pomp of power; but the greatest of all distinctions, the grandest and highest, is to have the name of the Great Father manifest in our lives, written on our very foreheads. A word or two on this distinction. I. It is the most **BEAUTIFUL**. The face is the beauty of man; there the soul reveals itself, sometimes in sunshine, and sometimes in clouds. The beauty of the face is not in features, but in expression, and the more it expresses of purity, intelligence, generosity, tenderness, the more beautiful. How beautiful, then, to have God's name radiating in it. God's name is the beauty of the universe. II. It is most **CONSPICUOUS**. "In their foreheads." It is seen wherever you go, fronting every object you look at. Godliness cannot conceal itself. Divine goodness is evermore self-revealing. As the face of Moses shone with a mystic radiance when he came down from the mount after holding fellowship with God, so the lives of all godly men are encircled with a Divine halo. III. It is most **HONOURABLE**. A man sometimes feels proud when he is told he is like some great statesman, ruler, thinker, reformer. How transcendently honourable is it to wear in our face the very image of God! Let us all seek this distinction. With the Father's name on our foreheads we shall throw the pageantry of the Shabs, the Csars, and all the kings of the earth into contempt.

No. LXXVIII.

Subject: THE SETTLED CONDITION OF A SINNER'S WELL-BEING.

"Ye will not come to me, that ye might have life."—John v. 40.

Man's well-being here and in various other places in the New Testament is represented as "life." And what is the "life"? Supreme love to God. This man had at first this he lost, and in its loss is his spiritual death. The man who has this is truly alive, and he only. Observe two things in relation to it. I. The settled condition **PROFOUNDED**. How is it to be obtained? Only by

... they come. Is it because it
is simple enough. They v
Dickens, their Cromwell, a
thoughts more simple and n
not His history more roman
they have discovered any othe
other way exists. All phil
Why then? First: They
Worldly gains and pleasures
too *prone to presume upon the ac*
They are too much under the
"Ye will not." "Why will

Literary

[We hold it to be the duty of an Editor
sent to him for remark, or to return them
praise worthless books; it is robbery to

THE REVIEW

In every work regard
Since none can comp

work of sacred exegesis. This new work on Mark abundantly sustains this language. The following extract from the preface will indicate the connection between this and the former volume :—"The following 'Commentary on the Gospel according to Mark,' though latently complementive of the author's 'Commentary on the Gospel according to Matthew,' is yet entirely self-contained. There are indeed occasional references to some fuller discussions or expositions in the Commentary on Matthew ; but the thread of continuous exposition in Mark is never suspended or broken off. The author conceives that he was not entitled to postulate the reader's possession of the earlier volume, and he imagines that it would have been a blunder in the structure of the present work had it imposed, even on those readers who possess the companion volume, the irksome task of turning to it, and turning it up, ere they could ascertain his opinion on any particular passage in Mark. In thus endeavouring to avoid a 'rock' on which many of his predecessors in the exposition of the Gospel had struck, the author was not unmindful that there was a little maelstrom, like Charybdis on the other side of Scylla, no less dangerous to navigators. Hence he has been on his guard not to allow any of the materials which have done duty in the Commentary on Matthew to float silently away into the whirlpool of circulatory repetition, in order to do double service in expounding the coincident representations in Mark. He hopes that whatever else his readers may miss in the present volume, they will find throughout fresh veins of representation and illustration, the result of fresh labour and research." There is no doubt that every thoughtful reader will find out in this volume "fresh veins of illustration and thought, the result of much labour and great research." On account of the two gospels containing so much in common, we should have liked the author to have given us a commentary on John in preference to Mark, unless indeed he intends to treat upon all the gospels, which we hope he will do. There are questions connected with the Gospel of John which are very vital and are becoming very urgent, and we know of no one within the whole circle of modern Biblical scholars who could handle them with greater ability, and give them a more satisfactory solution. We shall hope for such a work from Dr. Morison's pen. Meanwhile, we thank him for this inestimable volume, and heartily commend it to our brethren in the ministry as a work that will render them great service in their arduous and responsible labours.

BIBLICAL COMMENTARY ON THE BOOKS OF EZRA, NEHEMIAH, AND ESTHER. By C. F. KEIL, D.D. Translated from the German by SOPHIA TAYLOR. Edinburgh : T. and T. Clark, 38, George Street.

EZRA, Nehemiah, and Esther are books containing histories of thrilling interest, spiritual suggestiveness, and practical teaching. Dr. Keil in this volume goes through these histories with great critical attention.

Clark, 38, George Street.

WORKS of this kind are of great inter-
quarian and speculative proclivities.
charm, and are somewhat distasteful.
and loyal disciples of Christianity are
quence is it to us, or to our age, what
lands and times thought and said at
results, they have nearly all mal-rep
genius of the gospel, the true nature
Better, a thousand times better, had
never been ; but since they are, let the
tasted. We want Christ, not creeds ;
volume for those who may require the
that has interested us, we confess, is
editor, which is well written and frang

THE BIBLICAL MUSEUM. By JAMES
taining from the Epistles to Corinth
containing from the Epistle to the
ment.

THESE two volumes conclude Mr. Gr
ment. The remarks which we made
"Biblical Museum" will apply to these
plan as that on which their predecessors

RELIGIOUS THOUGHT IN ENGLAND FROM THE REFORMATION TO THE END OF LAST CENTURY. By Rev. JOHN HUNT, M.A. Vol. III.
London : Strahan and Co., 56, Ludgate Hill.

MOST heartily do we welcome this third and concluding volume on "Religious Thought in England," a work which in all respects we consider to be incomparably the best that has ever appeared on the subject. The following extract from the preface shows the noble spirit with which the author has prosecuted his arduous and invaluable labours:—"The spirit in which this work is written is, I trust, altogether different from the ordinary spirit in which histories of the Church or of theology are generally written. I have not abused those from whom I differ, and I have not exalted those with whom I agree. I have had beside me for general reference Dean Hook's 'Ecclesiastical Biography,' and have tried to fight against the spirit that pervades it. When the Dean comes to a Non-juror, or a Scotch Episcopalian, he is sure to find a saint, a confessor, or a martyr, to whom many pages of eulogy are to be devoted. When he comes to a Nonconformist, even if it be a Calamy, a Howe, or a Watts, they are served with a few dates and perhaps a list of their publications. A liberal Churchman is generally described as 'this unprincipled man,' or this 'Arian heretic,' while for the leaders of Presbyterianism in Scotland the Dean opens the flood-gates of his wrath, and pours forth an overwhelming torrent of hatred, malice, and all uncharitableness. My wish has been to write a history of theology on the rigid principles of natural science; to appeal to no man's partialities or prejudices, but to state the naked truth, however cold the form in which it might appear. I have remembered a wise saying of John Stuart Mill, that 'a doctrine is not judged at all till it is judged in its best form,' and I have tried to write as if the time predicted by Hooker were come, when 'three words written with charity and meekness shall receive a more blessed reward than three thousand volumes written with a disdainful sharpness of wit.'" The author intimates his intention of writing a history of religious life in England. We sincerely hope he may be enabled to do so. Meanwhile we take the opportunity of again urging our readers to procure and study these three volumes of priceless worth.

APOLOGETIC LECTURES ON THE MORAL TRUTHS OF CHRISTIANITY. By CHARLES ERNST LUTHARDT, Doctor and Professor of Theology. Translated from the German by SOPHIA TAYLOR. Edinburgh : T. and T. Clark, 38, George Street.

THE author in his preface says:—"It has been my long-cherished purpose to deliver and publish public lectures on Christian morals. The execution of my design has been delayed by circumstances, and particularly by the warlike events of the last few years. But the discussion of such questions can never be too late. If ever there was an age when this

this is sometimes forgotten, still it is
our sight."

With these remarks we have a heart
lectures are—"Nature of Christianity,
tian and the Christian Virtues," "Th
and his Attitude towards the Church,
Christian Home," "The State and
Christian in the State," "Culture a
Christianity." All these subjects are
ness and devotion. There is a great
practical aim.

**THE BEING AND ATTRIBUTES OF
CREATION. By DAVID NELSON, 1892,
192, Piccadilly.**

We are informed that the substance of
of discourses. The grand object was 'tion
of a living and loving God, not
illustrations, but by one grand and ge
of things as a collective fact or totality
ful perusal. Its aim is high, its thoug
spirit admirable.

**THE PLAN OF ST. LUKE'S GOSPEL:
REV. WILLIAM STEWART, M.A.,
The illustration of the hypothesis 1**



Sermonic Kernels by the Illustrious Schleiermacher.

VI.

[Dr. F. Schleiermacher (1768–1834), Professor of Theology in the University of Halle, and then, from the year 1810 till his death, in that of Berlin. From 1807 till his death he was also the minister of Trinity Church in Berlin. Both as preacher and theological teacher his influence has been of the very highest character, and more extensive probably, directly or indirectly, than that of any other divine of the century.]

THE SCRIPTURAL LIMITATION OF OUR SOLICITUDE FOR THE FUTURE.

THE wisdom taught by the religion of Jesus is so entirely opposed to the prudence of this world, which yet most men aspire after, that but few are able to relish it. It knows nothing of the contradictions and subtilties of men, whose aims are only earthward; and being thus so easy and simple, to some it is a stumbling-block, to others foolishness. Nor can it be otherwise, as its precepts are intelligible only to the disposition which it presupposes. Hence, the holiest and purest doctrines of Christianity being misunderstood, the gay and frivolous make a jest of them; the serious, but wise in their own conceit, most bitterly blame and reject them, as if they unfitted man for the duties of life, or even polluted his conscience; and, worst of all, pretended

advocates of those doctrines so misrepresent them, that their most distinctive and most excellent peculiarities are lost sight of. The teaching of Scripture as to the way in which we are to trust God and cast our care upon Him in regard to the future, is an instance of this. No doubt it is most difficult, in this matter, to decide upon the right course (which seems to lie between too much care on the one hand, and too little on the other), and upon the relation between the human will and the Divine foreknowledge. The Scripture, however, teaches us that we can leave all those difficulties undecided, since we are to concern ourselves with the present day alone. This men find incomprehensible. Considering the time they themselves spend in caring for the future, and the thousand beneficial arrangements in society which depend upon this care, they see not whither that doctrine tends; it is too high for them, because too simple. And hence, while some by turns torment themselves about the future, and squander away the present in the neglect of duty and in excessive gratifications; others, considering need as the only spur to diligence and activity, take offence at this friendly doctrine, and think that, if it were universally received, humanity would be brought back to the old state of barbarity and want. "No," reply the self-styled friends of religion; "it is nowhere promised that man shall gain anything without using the Divinely appointed means. It is intended that man should care for the future, only not passionately, or anxiously, but in a rational manner. Having taken steps to promote his welfare and to ensure his contentment, he is to leave the issue to God." But is not this the language of the worldly-minded? Do you not see in it "the old man," which should have been "put off." Is not this ingrafting religion on an earthly mind, or wishing to gather figs from thistles? Let us now consider the Saviour's teaching on this subject in its

grand simplicity, without reasoning into it anything which does not belong to it.

“Take therefore no thought for the morrow : for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.”—Matt. vi. 34.

Nothing can be clearer than these glorious words. Every day has its own troubles, needs, employments, and these we are to attend to with diligence and honest zeal. But there we are to let the matter rest, believing that the best preparation for the duties of to-morrow is to be found in doing well the duties of to-day. Care for the future must neither divert our attention from these duties, nor curtail our enjoyment of the good imparted to us for to-day. Such is the sense of the text. If we think of the evil effects resulting from our short-sighted care for the future, and from always having a double aim in view, we must all at least desire that this doctrine may prove itself to be wise and right.

I. This precipitate care for the future has reference most widely and commonly to the *accidental events of life*. Unexpected reverses are at no time rare ; indeed they seem to become more frequent as the inter-relationship of men increases. In every such misfortune the sufferer is apt to think, that if his connections and the conduct of his affairs had been otherwise, the sad event would not have occurred to him. The aim, therefore, of this careful prudence is, to intrench itself behind the surest and firmest connections, and so to interweave its welfare with that of others, that when danger threatens help may be forthcoming on all sides. But even then the greatest caution is used not to provoke any adverse power, and this caution, with its consequent unrest, increases more and more.

You will be obliged, my friends, to confess that all these efforts lead to nothing certain ; no human sagacity,

or goodwill, or self-interest, can ensure perfect security. Even *infallible* prudence (which, supposing it possible, could not exist without the severest application of human effort), although attended with the greatest success, would never accomplish its tasks. For a new future demanding all your energy would constantly appear; and you, by continuing indifferent to the present, would never enjoy the fruit of your labour. And what sorrow and anxiety all this occasions! How much of the brief period of life is lost thereby! Therefore Christ never concerned Himself about contingencies. Impending persecutions, future perils, these afforded no considerations to induce Him to change His course, or to form any connection for His own advantage. All such precautions He neglected, however innocent. And why? Because they did not at all enter into His mind, and because He might not turn aside to do, or to avoid doing, anything solely on account of the future. Every moment He had His Father's will to do; and only one way of doing it was before Him—namely, that which was suggested by His vocation, and which testified most distinctly of His character. Now, we who would be His disciples, are under the same law. To us it is intended that every moment and every action should be sacred. In this sense we have nothing capricious to provide against. Every moment furnishes us with some task, which is God's will in regard to us. And, however arbitrarily others may proceed, for us, as for our Lord, there is only one way of doing it—namely, that which is conducive to our vocation, in harmony with our principles, and expressive of our individuality. In this way alone we walk in simplicity before God. And thus, attending heartily to the things of to-day, we shall find in consequence that to-morrow will care for itself. Which of the two, therefore, is more the sport of accidents: he who in this respect follows the example of Christ, or he

who by his anxiety for the future is disturbed, embittered, and tormented at every step?

II. "But if we take into consideration the *wants* of the future, then, surely, it does seem as if man could not dispense with care altogether. There are many of those wants that recur, not every day, but at longer intervals. If now we overlook these and then suffer for it, should we not be objects of merited derision? And if we are to pay no heed to the future, how are we to avoid excess and irregularity in our expenditure, &c., and consequent embarrassments?"

This reasoning looks uncommonly sound. But what do you propose to do in order to escape these disadvantages, and the more certainly to satisfy those wants? Will you provide against the results of excess and immoderation? incessantly accumulate as much as possible? starve yourself now that you may feast hereafter? undertake, for the sake of a little extra security, tasks too heavy for you? even entertain thoughts of dishonest gain? Many through their constant regard to future wants, come, unhappily, to this. But no, there are other means: you will not be at any time extravagant; you will not think of wants until they demand your attention; you will as much as possible cultivate moderation, order, and conscientious diligence. If it is in this way that you propose to meet the future, then confess, that the Saviour has good reason for promising His own, that with them the morrow will care for itself; for without casting half a glance into the future they do all these things from other principles. They are saved from extravagance, by strictly providing only for the wants of the day, and from imprudence, by considering their needs as they arise. They are diligent in their business, not for the gain accruing thereby, but for the good promoted, for the benefits thence arising to others, and contributed to the

common weal and subsistence of society. They are orderly, not because they spare much and are much relieved thereby, but because by order time is gained, and because understanding and reflection are represented in it. They are temperate, not in order to avoid the natural penalty that hobbles after vice, but because nothing sensual has such charms for them, that they could for its sake forget the beautiful and good. What need, therefore, have they to think and care for the future? would it be to keep them the more surely in the way they have chosen? or to console them for being unable to act otherwise? In this precisely lies the great difference between him who, free from care, looks not beyond the present hour, but does his duty at all times with a whole heart, and him to whom everything that looks like virtue is but a mercenary affectation. The former pursues an even course, guided by firm principles, and ever reaping the advantages of his conduct; the latter, between anxiety and eager desire, now turns to the right, now to the left, now stints himself without need, and now by yielding to excess, loses the fruit of a long and laborious season of restraint. The former, conscientiously attending to the duties of the day, is free from care, and happy; but the latter brings his sacrifice to the future with a heavy heart, and would gladly be exempt from offering it. Woe to the man who fulfils the duties of his calling in a hireling spirit! No better, but more unhappy, is he than the man who leads a life of idleness. Woe to him who subjects himself to the laws of moderation only for fear of consequences! No better, but more cowardly, is he than the loose, unbridled voluptuary. But so it is: fear or love must rule in men. But where the spirit of Christ reigns, there fear is driven out, and the mastery of care annihilated.

III. Yet the tendency to be solicitous for the future is so deeply rooted in the human soul that even ~~many~~ ^{the}

Christians cannot entirely overcome it. They suppose that men cannot too soon direct their attention to the *duties*, virtues, and pious deeds demanded of them in the future, or be too maturely prepared for them. I admit that the Saviour was not now thinking immediately of pious acts: still the precept before us is quite applicable to them. For this supposition rests upon the very errors we have been considering.

Are we really in the right—this is the first question to be answered—when, in the education of the young, we regard all their exercises only as preparatory to what will be required of them in later years? As a fact, everything connected with education—intellectual or moral—is so treated by most persons. And thus it is that the youth, partly assuming the reins of his own life, continues to pursue the course to which he has been accustomed, and prepares himself beforehand for the duties of the station which he hopes to take in society; and the work of preparation evermore goes on, so long as any grade of moral or social elevation is left to rise to. But to my mind there is a great error in this. Is it not contrary to the respect we owe to human life, to treat any one part of it as a means to that next following it? Is it not beneath the dignity of any kind of wholesome knowledge, much more beneath the dignity of religion, when they are inculcated only as a means of preparation, and are meant therefore to dwell in a mind incapable as yet of appreciating their proper worth? And this error gives rise to considerable mischief. Much in the education we give our children is rendered fruitless by it. The young, under the heavy pressure of their hard fetters, have but little enjoyment of the fairest period of life. And many a noble mind, in the general haste from one state of life into another, is reduced by over-haste to worn-out mediocrity. Let us not impatiently outrun the order of

nature; but let us be assured, that the best thing we can do for the future, is to do without regard to the future what is best and most salutary for the present. If we are less concerned that our children should become youths than that they should be children, and children at their best; and if we accompany the gradual evolution of nature in our children with our helpful love rather than accelerate it by force: then every sort of instruction we can give them will find its best place, and the future will be best cared for without care.

Are we justified—this is our second question—are we as Christians justified in believing, that for every steadfast performance of duty, for every sacrifice, for every self-conquest, not forming part of the usual occurrences of our life, a special preparation is necessary? This is what so many Christians understand to belong to the necessary exercises of piety. But, however excellent devout contemplation, prayer, outward activities, or restrictions may be when they occur in the course of our duties, or as the utterance of our heart's need; so soon as they are taken up expressly with a view to anything future, they become objectionable, because superfluous. To me such conduct presupposes opinions that cannot harmonise with the spirit of Christianity—as if the various proofs of virtue required of us were very different from one another, and therefore independent of one another. The gospel is a faith, which encourages to all good; a love, which urges to all good; a spirit, which brings all within us into activity and perfection; and in the contest of spirit against flesh, the same foe is to be conquered, however various the forms he may assume. Therefore the contest, the good testimony of to-day, affords the best pledge that the good will equally prosper with us to-morrow. Farther, does not that solicitude about preparation rest upon the notion, as if any kind of virtue could be strange and new

to the Christian? Virtue of this character there may be for such as, in all that pertains to the inward conduct of the soul, heed only the great and striking. But the daily duty of every Christian is to give heed to himself and others so as to become familiar with the human heart in every respect; and compliance with this duty is the best preparation for whatever may befall us on the morrow.

Think now how sure and how exalted this simple wisdom of the Redeemer appears in every aspect! Let the fools treat it as folly! We will adoringly revere and take advantage of it. Rejoice in the Lord, who teaches you this wisdom, and again I say, rejoice! How easy the yoke of the Redeemer, and from what heavy burdens He delivers us! With anxiety for the future, we cast off, oh, more than the half of human misery! And how joy and gladness, springing up in the consecrated ground of the heart, increase on all sides, when those rocks are rolled away! How cheerful and serene our minds become, how steady our composure, how plain and unmistakable the way of life before us! In it we will joyfully walk without care! and discharge each present task with freshness; the future is the Lord's. He will do all things well. Such was the character and life of Christ, let it also be ours.

W. E. COLLIER.

CHRISTIANITY.—“Other sciences may strengthen certain faculties of the soul; some the intellect, some the imagination, some the memory; but Christianity strengthens the soul itself. The light which other sciences shed upon the mind is only as the lunar ray. However bright, it is chilly; it plays only upon the surface, and does not penetrate to the roots of life. Christianity is a solar beam; it goes down into the hidden springs of being, quickens the latent germs, and makes the mental world bud with life and bloom with beauty.”

Homiletic Sketches on the Book of Psalms.

Our Purpose.—Many learned and devout men have gone *philologically* through this **TEHILLIM**, this book of Hebrew hymns, and have left us the rich results of their inquiries in volumes within the reach of every Biblical student. To do the mere verbal *hermeneutics* of this book, even as well as it has been done, would be to contribute nothing fresh in the way of evoking or enforcing its Divine ideas. A thorough **HOMILETIC** treatment it has never yet received, and to this work we here commit ourselves, determining to employ the best results of modern Biblical scholarship.

Our Method. Our plan of treatment will comprise four sections:—(1.) The **HISTORY** of the passage. Lyric poetry, which the book is, is a delineation of living character; and the key, therefore, to unlock the meaning and reach the spirit of the words is a knowledge of the men and circumstances that the poet sketches with his lyric pencil.—(2.) **ANNOTATIONS** of the passage. This will include short explanatory notes on any ambiguous word, phrase, or allusion that may occur.—(3.) The **ARGUMENT** of the passage. A knowledge of the main drift of an author is amongst the most essential conditions for interpreting his meaning.—(4.) The **HOMILETICS** of the passage. This is our main work. We shall endeavour so to group the Divine ideas that have been legitimately deduced, as to suggest such thoughts, and indicate such sermonising methods, as may promote the proficiency of modern pulpit ministrations.

**Subject: Fretful Envy of the Wicked. (3) Facts reveal
its Folly—(continued).**

“The wicked borroweth and payeth not again :
But the righteous sheweth mercy and giveth,
For such as be blessed of him shall inherit the earth ;
And they that be cursed of him shall be cut off.
The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord ;
And he delighteth in his way.
Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down,
For the Lord upholdeth him with his hand.
I have been young and now am old,
Yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken,
Nor his seed begging bread.
He is ever merciful and lendeth :
And his seed is blessed.”—Psalm xxxvii. 21—28.

HISTORY.—See Vol. XXXII., p. 266.

ANNOTATIONS.—*Ver.* 21.—“*The wicked borroweth and payeth not again.*”

Wickedness often reduces man to such exigencies that he has to borrow, and often he fails either for the want of means or lack of disposition, or

both, to return the loan. "*But the righteous sheweth mercy and giveth.*" Practical beneficence is the characteristic of the righteous. They are always giving, in some form or other, in kindly offices, loving sympathies when unable to contribute aught of worldly wealth. The reference here may be to Deut. v. 6 ; xii. 44. The tendency of a righteous life is to make him secularly prosperous, and the spirit of his life to make him generous.

Ver. 22.—"For such as be blessed of him inherit the earth; and they that be cursed of him shall be cut off." We have had this sentiment in a former verse of this psalm. God's favour insures a permanent prosperity; God's disfavour is followed by destruction, "shall be cut off."

Ver. 23.—"The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord." The word "ordered" is in the margin rendered "established." The idea is that the life of a good man is under the unerring and unchanging direction of heaven. "When this Pilot," says an old writer, "undertakes to steer their course their vessel shall never split upon the rock, run upon the sands, or spring a leak so as to sink into the seas." "*And he delighteth in his way.*" Nothing pleases the Holy One more than to see His moral offspring pursue a righteous course.

Ver. 24.—"Though he fall he shall not be utterly cast down." The "fall" referred to here is not a moral fall, though the best of men are liable to that, but a secular fall—adversity. Many of the best men in the road of secular life not only stumble, but fall down into the pit of bankruptcy and distress. What of that? "*The Lord upholdeth him with His hand.*" If he is not lifted from the secular exigencies into which he has fallen, he will be upheld in soul by his Father's gracious hand. As his day so his strength shall be.

Ver. 25.—"I have been young and now am old, yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread." Here the Psalmist gives the result of his own experience. He had passed through all the stages of life, and had now reached the last, and the result of his observation in relation to God's providence over the good is here, "I have not seen the righteous forsaken nor his seed begging bread."

Ver. 26.—"He is ever merciful and lendeth: and his seed is blessed." This is pretty well the same idea as in the last clause of 21st verse. The good man lendeth and is merciful, and because of this God blesseth his posterity.

ARGUMENT.—See Vol. XXXII., page 267.

HOMILETICS. All the utterances of the writer in this Psalm, whose sentiments are frequently repeated, and which often seem very disconnected, must be looked upon in relation to

the general subject started in the first verses, viz., the *fretful envy of the wicked*. In these verses he further proceeds to show their folly in feeling anything like envy for the wicked by sketching the elevated position of the righteous. The position of the righteous is indicated here in three relations:

I. In relation to SOCIETY. "The wicked borroweth and payeth not again, but the righteous sheweth mercy and giveth." The righteous man here is put in social contrast to the wicked, which "borroweth" and doth not pay. This is truly despicable. Although there may be no harm in borrowing, yet the very act implies a *needy* condition; and to borrow and not return is for some reasons a worse dishonesty than an actual theft. David means to say that the wicked are often in society needy and dishonest. In contrast with this, look at the righteous, "The righteous sheweth mercy and giveth." Two things are implied here:

First: That he has the *means* of helping. Moral goodness is favourable to secular prosperity; it involves diligence, economy, prudence, conditions by which wealth is attained. It is therefore profitable, not only for the life which is to come, but to the life that now is. As a rule the genuinely religious are not too indigent to render some help to their fellow-men.

Secondly: That he has always the *disposition* to help. "The righteous sheweth mercy and giveth." And in the 26th verse it says, "he is ever merciful." The instinct of generous communication is the law of his life. He is always giving, it may be only a cup of cold water, a cheering word, or a tear of sympathy. Why should such a man, then, envy the wicked? He is not a dishonest borrower, not a social sponger, or a parasite; however poor, he sustains in society the dignified position of a social benefactor. The position of the righteous is indicated here:

II. In relation to God.

First: He *blesses* the righteous but not the wicked. "Such as be blessed of Him." He does not bless the wicked. He curseth them. Blessings and curses. What words are these!

Benediction and anathema, the highest heaven and the deepest hell.

Secondly: He *establishes* the righteous but not the wicked. "The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord." As God has put every planet into its separate orbit, and each to move around the sun, so He has put every good man in his particular course of life, and on that course he pursues his way with a vigour and a wisdom derived from heaven. Although he is conscious of perfect freedom in every step, he is withal the subject of absolute necessity. "Thine ears shall hear a voice behind thee saying, This is the way, walk ye in it. When ye turn to the right or when ye turn to the left." Not so with the wicked. Satan, not God, has mapped out their path—dark, rugged, perilous.

Thirdly: He *is pleased* with the righteous, but not with the wicked. "He delighteth in his way." God is pleased to see His children walk in the right path, for every step is in harmony with His will, in unison with the universe, and beats new blessedness into their own hearts. Not so with the wicked. He is displeased with them. "He is angry with the wicked every day." The position of the righteous is indicated here:

III. In relation to THE WORLD.

First: *They will be kept from utter destitution.* "Though he fall he shall not be utterly cast down." Moral goodness, though highly favourable to secular prosperity, is not an infallible guarantee against reverses in fortune and adversity. Calamities often overtake the good, they have sometimes to suffer the loss of all things. Albeit, they are not "utterly cast down." "The Lord upholdeth him with his hand." "Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the Lord delivereth them out of them all." They may be persecuted, but not forsaken, cast down, but not destroyed.

Secondly: *Neither they nor their children shall be utterly neglected.* "I have been young and now am old, yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken nor his seed begging bread." It is not to be supposed that the Psalmist intended to say that

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CONCLUSION. Where, then
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“Religion 's all. Descen

Homiletic Sketches on the Book of Job.

The Book of Job is one of the grandest sections of Divine Scripture. It has never yet, to our knowledge, been treated in a purely Homiletic method for Homiletic ends. Besides many learned expositions on the book found in our general commentaries, we have special exegetical volumes of good scholarly and critical worth: such as Drs. Barnes, Wemyss, Mason Goode, Noyes Lee, Delitzsch, and Herman Hedwick Bernard: the last is in every way a masterly production. For us, therefore, to go into philology and verbal criticism, when such admirable works are available to all students, would be superfluous, if not presumption. Ambiguous terms, when they occur, we shall of course explain, and occasionally suggest an improved rendering: but our work will be chiefly, if not entirely, Homiletic. We shall essay to bring out from the grand old words those Divine verities which are true and vital to man as man in all lands and ages. These truths we shall frame in an order as philosophic and suggestive as our best powers will enable us to do; and this in order to help the earnest preachers of God's Holy Word.

Subject: Job's Argument with his three friends. (2) The argument he employs against the doctrine, that God treats Men according to character here.

“The tabernacles of robbers prosper,
And they that provoke God are secure,
Into whose hand God bringeth abundantly.
But ask now the beasts, and they shall teach thee;
And the fowls of the air, and they shall tell thee;
Or speak to the earth, and it shall teach thee,
And the fishes of the sea shall declare unto thee,
Who knoweth not in all these
That the hand of the Lord hath wrought this?
In whose hand is the soul of every living thing,
And the breath of all mankind.
Doth not the ear try words?
And the mouth taste his meat?
With the ancient is wisdom,
And in length of days is understanding.”—Job xii. 6—12.

EXEGETICAL REMARKS.—Ver. 6.—“*The tabernacles of robbers prosper, and they that provoke God are secure.*” The Arabs in ancient and even in modern times were predatory tribes and dwelt in tents. They were marauders, they lived on plunder, and the most daring and reckless of them would be likely to gain the greatest wealth. They would prosper

study irrational life, not for general character of God, but fere to protect the weak ag conduct with man in not trea analogy in His treatment of t

Ver. 8.—“ Or speak to the earth the sea shall declare unto thee.” piscatorial life, and for the san does not interfere in the mate stroying the lambs; the vultu the useful plant; the monster more does He interfere in hum character.

Ver. 9.—“ Who knoweth not in wrought this.” The expressi scribes. Jehovah is the word, s place where the word occurs in the speaker means to say is th his position through all the low

Ver. 10.—“ In whose hand is the s of all mankind.” The word “s it). And “all mankind” “fles idea is that man is subject to the s

Ver. 11.—“ Doth not the ear try v


mine. 'Taste his meat,' tastes to find its own suitable food, the food which pleases it."

Ver. 12.—"With the ancient is wisdom: and in length of days is understanding." This expression may be taken as almost proverbial in Job's age and land. As knowledge in those remote ages in Eastern lands came by tradition rather than by literature, the oldest man, who had obtained the widest observation and the longest experience, would be the oracle.

HOMILETICS. The grand point of contention between Job and his friends was that God treats men here according to their moral character. This they maintained, some of them with a great deal of genius and strong argument, all of them with great earnestness and determination. Because they maintained this they concluded that as Job was a great sufferer he must be a great sinner, especially offensive to the eye of heaven. Job denies this proposition, and he does so with all his might, and by a vast variety of argument and illustration. In refutation of their views, and in support of his own, he here points to three things: to the experience of human life, the history of inferior life, the maxims of philosophic life.

I. The **EXPERIENCE** of **HUMAN** life. "The tabernacles of robbers prosper, and they that provoke God are secure, into whose hand God bringeth abundantly." He means to say your proposition touching God's dealing with man is contradicted by facts lying about you in all directions. Who of the nomadic people around you are the most prosperous? Those who have the most practical respect for the rights of their fellow men, who are the most peaceful and chaste in their social relations, the most upright, reverent, and devout in spirit; or the men of heartless hardihood, sensual indulgences, reckless injustice, and unabashed profanity? You know right well that the "tabernacles of robbers prosper." Hence your position is false. He does not treat men according to their character.

The fact that Job here refers to, viz., the prosperity of wicked men, may be regarded as—First: One of the *most common* facts in human experience. All men in all lands and



facts in human experience. The principles it still rises before one in that perplex the heart. What through life has not asked a hundred the wicked prosper?" and has not ling into infidelity as he saw the Thirdly: One of the most *predict* rience. This fact points to retribut of justice in the universe there mus of things, there must be a day of re balance will be struck.

" Oh, how portentous is prosperit
How, comet-like, it threatens w
Few years but yield us proof of
To cull his victims from the fair

II. The HISTORY of INFERIOR li
beasts and they shall teach thee : as
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Isaiah to the ox and the ass ; Jer
turtle-dove. the crane. the swallow : s

same lack of interference on God's part in the free operations of men in this life, in punishing the wicked and rewarding the good, you see around you in all the lower stages of life. Look to the beasts of the field. Does the Governor of the world interfere to crush the lion, the tiger, the panther, or the wolf from devouring the feebler creation of His hands? Does He come to the rescue of the shrieking, suffering victims? Behold the "fowls of the air." See the eagle, the vulture, the hawk pouncing down on the dove, the thrush, the black-bird, or the robin. Does He interfere to arrest their flight, or curb their savage instincts? "Speak to the earth." See the noxious weeds choking the flowers, stealing away life from the fruit trees, does He send a blast to wither the pernicious herb? Not He. Turn to the "fishes of the sea." Does He prevent the whale, the shark, and other monsters from devouring the smaller tenants of the deep? No; He allows all these creatures to develop their instincts and their propensities. It is even so with man. He allows man full scope here to work out what is in him, to get what he can. He does not crush the tyrant, nor break the fetters of the slave, He does not keep the avaricious man in poverty, or lift the spiritual man into affluence. He allows things to take their course. "All things come alike to all." And He is in all. "Who knoweth not in all these that the hand of God hath wrought this? In whose hand is the soul of every living thing, and the breath of all mankind."

III. The *MAXIMS* of PHILOSOPHIC life. "Doth not the ear try his words? and the mouth taste his meat? With the ancient is wisdom, and in length of days is understanding." There is something like a syllogism in this verse. First: That the more the mind exercises itself upon moral questions the more capable it is to pronounce a correct judgment. Just as the *gourmand* gets a nicer appreciation of the qualities of

nature; so should we. (2) They seek their pleasure from the true sources; so should we. (3) They answer the end of their existence; so should we.

are favourable to his convictions
men.

So that he here points to the c
phic men of the past, and he claim
all ancient philosophers are of his

Sermonic Glances

St. J

As our purpose in the treatment of this Ge
briefest and most suggestive form, of Serme
to the following works for all critical inqui
the book, and also for any minute criticism
shall especially consult are :—"Introduction
mentary on John," by Tholuck ; "Comment
roduction to the Study of the Gospels," b
Ebrard ; "Our Lord's Divinity," by Liddon
"Doctrine of the Person of Christ," by Dorne

Subject : Christ's Vindication
Charge of Sabbath Breaki
Agency of God

posed to refer to a judicial arraignment. It would seem that there were minor Sanhedrims, exercising jurisdiction in Judæa, consisting sometimes of twenty, sometimes of seven, sometimes of three. Probably one of the smaller Sanhedrims were sitting in order to determine how best to put this Sabbath-breaker to death. "*And sought to slay him.*" These words are struck out by the best critics, although they are retained in the 18th verse—"Because he had done these things on the sabbath day." What things? (1) The healing of the invalid on the Sabbath. (2) The commanding the healed man to carry his bed. It was directed in the law of Moses that a Sabbath-breaker should be put to death. (Exod. xxxi. 15; xxxv. 2.) But was a work of mercy on the Sabbath a violation of the fourth commandment? Besides, He was Lord of the Sabbath.

Ver. 17.—"But Jesus answered them, My Father worketh hitherto, and I work." "My Father worketh until now, and I work also." "A difficult answer," says Lange. "It undoubtedly asserts:—(1) Christ's exaltation above the Sabbath law, like Mark ii. 28. (2) The conformity of His work to the law of the Sabbath: in other words, His fulfilling of the Sabbath law—Matt. xii. 12. (3) The relation of the working of God to His own working, as its pattern—ver. 20. (4) His working out from God, and with God which makes their charge a charge against God Himself—ver. 19. The last idea has special emphasis."

HOMILETICS. Before studying the way in which the Great Son of God met this charge, it may be well for us to glance a moment at that *religious bigotry* which we just touched upon in a few pages back.* We have said that bigotry is heartless, punctilious, inquisitorial. It is further suggested by these words that it is *arrogant*. Here are a few ignorant men daring to sit in judgment upon One Who had manifested to their eyes the divine attributes of mercy and power. Ignorance sitting in judgment upon wisdom, vice sitting in judgment upon virtue, human frailty upon superhuman power.

Christ met this charge by pleading the example of His Father: "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work." Observe (1), God works. He is essentially active, and His activity explains not only the existence but all the operations

* See p. 20 of present volume.

I. That it is RIGHT. Christ pleads what He had just accomplished and that God "rested on the seventh day." rest, non-working is not Sabbath the Sabbath, and therefore working. The Infinite cannot do wrong. Because He does it; there is no law against it. His actions are the expressive laws of absolute right. Well-defined. Another thing which is implied in God's *unremitting* operations is—

II. That it is EXEMPLARY. "My Father and I work." What He does, I am to do. What He is, I am to be. We are all commanded to be partakers of the Divine nature, to be like Him. How can the finite imitate the infinite? in attributes but in spirit and aim; what He does, we can have the same result. All His procedure, viz., love. His operations, and so should we be. His business on His universe on Sabbath and on that day our grand object is to bless our fellow-men. Again. we repeat.

Germs of Thought.

Subject : A substantial shadow amid the insubstantials.

“ And there shall be a tabernacle for a shadow in the day time from the heat, and for a place of refuge.”—Isaiah iv. 6.

THE tabernacles of the Old Testament typify the abiding glory of that true tabernacle which the Lord pitched and not man. They were taken down. This abideth evermore. The dissolving process of death only developed the capacity of the divine Redeemer to become a universal tabernacle. The divine Being made gracious and glorious disclosures of Himself in those destroyed tabernacles; but more wonderful divine revelations are made in the tabernacle of that fleshly nature which divinity assumed in the town of Bethlehem. The type, then, is far exceeded by the antitype. Isaiah saw the divine King in all His beauty and in all His adaptedness for the world's deep needs when he declared, “ And there shall be a tabernacle for a shadow in the day time from the heat.” “ These things said Esaias, when he saw his glory, and spake of him.”

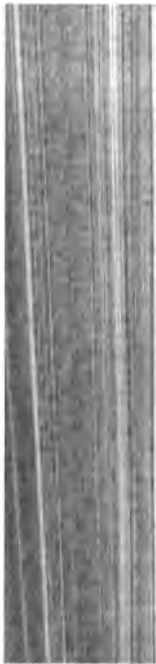
The word shadow is not always attractively employed. David speaks of the valley of the shadow of death. Job, in telling and mournful imagery, describes the traveller going to the land of darkness, and the shadow of death—“ a land of darkness as darkness itself; and of the shadow of death without any order, and where the light is as darkness.” Following out these suggestions death is somewhere spoken of as the shadow feared by man—the dark shadow that haunts him most his days. And cheering ideas are not always suggested by the proverb which affirms that coming events cast their shadows before them. The approach of joyful events is heralded by welcome strains, and by joy-inspiring prognostications. The on-coming evil sends out its lengthened shadow,

down his rays ; when earth and I
producing intense heat ; then the
cooling shadow. The very thou
refreshing. The mind refreshes
influence of sea-breezes. The cool
where wild flowers bloom and bu
music, is a lonely hermitage cove
palace. The mind is regal. It
tion can thus surround the man
a kind of real force, and allevi
existence. In this sense it is bet
tion than to have a full purse.
oppressive heat other than that
natural sun, and which makes h
On the coldest day in winter you
summed by the hot fire that burns
of fierce competition. The feveri
pursue riches. The awful strug
a scanty livelihood. Oh, what wear
crowded streets ! Their feet are
burning flags. Their souls are wi
pointments. Their cries for help

but in Christ? Where shall spirits oppressed with heat find a cooling shadow? Where? In this true tabernacle. The heats of this world will not be so oppressive to him who dwells in this tabernacle. For the soul finds adequate provisions for the wants and aspirations of its large capacities in this substantial shadow. If any man is restless and feverish let him come to this shadow from the heat.

II. This tabernacle is a *life-giving and preserving shadow*. The summer heat of Judæa is intense. Some of the rivers are dried up, and become lanes of burning glaring sand. Near Mount Tabor many of the soldiers of Baldwin IV. died through the oppressive heat; and at this very place of Shunem, the son of the Shunammite was struck in the head by the sun's rays as he went up to his father to the reapers, and he died. In the light of such considerations how impressive are the words of the ancient prophet, "And a man shall be as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land"! A shadow to impart and preserve life as well as to give a cooling place of resort. There is the heat which comes from the broken laws. The spirit of man dies in consequence of unforgiven transgression, but life is found in the true tabernacle. Listen to the cheerful words of Jeremiah, "Under his shadow we shall live among the heathen." If, then, men desire a life-giving and a life-preserving shadow, let them go by repentance and faith unto the Redeemer. In him was life, and the life is the light of men. In him still is life. That life is light. How glorious! Not a cloud obscures. All true life is light. The truest life and clearest light are found in and proceed from the Saviour. He that believeth on the Son of God shall not see death.

III. This tabernacle is a *delightful shadow*. Delightful, not only passively but actively. Delightful, not only in protecting from evils, but in the direct impartation of pleasure. In the book of Canticles the Church is represented as thus sweetly singing, "As the apple-trees among the trees of the wood, so is my beloved among the sons. I sat down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet unto



stormless shores, and safely re-
grateful reflections will occupy
know how much we are indebted
been a strength to us needy ones
refuge from the storms of time
from the heat of the world through
by divine grace.

IV. This tabernacle is *an abode*
God prepared a gourd, and made
it might be a shadow over his head
grief. So Jonah was exceedingly
God prepared a worm when the
it smote the gourd that it withered
an object of pity! Both sea and
seemed to be in league against
worms are ever eating at our heels
time we are exceedingly glad of the
the head, to deliver us from our
of God's providential dealing: as
shadow disappears, the sun burns
wish ourselves dead. Let such realize
God sees our tendency to idolatry
only is the object. Selfish Jonah

perfect and ever-abiding shadow. When our souls are troubled and anxious about many things—when the fever of the world is upon us—let us find a calm and safe retreat beneath that shadow which no worm can smite—which ever extends its benign and refreshing influences over the weary sons of God. Happy the man who abides beneath this enduring shadow! “He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty.” Sublime dweller! Glorious abider! Secret places of delight, and divine secrets of love, are for those who fear God. The shadows of the Almighty are better than the so-called substances of this world, and are the heritage of those who fear God’s glorious name.

As the closing scenes of life drew near, one of God’s ministers—his name unknown to men; no matter for that; earth’s unknown names are sometimes heaven’s best known—exclaimed “Open my eyes, O Lord Jesus, be with me this day; He is my rock, my strength, my sure support, my everlasting refuge. Shadows cannot hurt, shadows of serpents cannot bite, shadows of darkness cannot blind, shadows of devils cannot injure.” It was said to him, “But in the shadow of a great rock you are safe;” and he feebly added, “Yes, safe in Jesus.” The shadows of death should not alarm when safely sheltered beneath the true shadow.

Unspeakably blessed the man who has no cause to tremble as the shadow feared by man approaches! When death casts its withering shadows over the physical frame, may the divine Saviour cast His reviving and protecting shadow over the spiritual nature! Oh, to pass triumphantly through the valley of the shadow of death, to walk those peaceful valleys where there shall be no more death.

WILLIAM BURBOWS, B.A.

Uppermill, Manchester.



11

Christ is made acquainted with any assistance in their difficulty the ceremony to "Fill the water-pots" Contemplate—

I. THE EXTREMITY INTO WHICH WERE LIKELY TO BE BROUGHT. "And the mother of Jesus saith unto him (ver. 3). 1. *Under this extremity I set myself up to foolish speculation, or glory, and do not commence to talk about what he would say or do when he found out the store. They did not contemplate what might soon come upon the joy which was heard. They made Jesus acquainted with their folly. Here we have a pattern for ourselves. Do not spend time in foolish speculation, but go at once to Christ and tell Him of our folly. He will instruct you as to the best method.* 2. *Having obtained instruction from Christ, I have a prompt and absolute obedience to His command. At the marriage festival did not themselves fill the water-pots with water. Priests and ministers of the Gospel should be like the water-pots, filled with the water of life, and ready to give it to the thirsty.*

feast had refused to fill the water-pots, or had only half filled them, Christ would probably not have turned the water they contained into wine. Our effort to gain Divine aid must be real and earnest. It must not be half-hearted or conventional. All the diviner energies of our soul must be employed in obedience to the Divine command, and then will the help we need be given.

II. THE HELP WHICH WAS AFFORDED IN THEIR EXTREMITY. We must connect the help which we are now about to describe with the obedience rendered by these servants to Christ. 1. *The aid rendered was appropriate.* The servants needed wine for the marriage festival, and it was wine that Christ made for them. So in times of trouble has not the help vouchsafed to us been equally appropriate? 2. *The aid rendered was opportune.* Christ did not wait to make the wine until the guests had all become aware of the scanty supply. The master of the feast had not to acknowledge publicly his more than economical management, to the amusement of those present. All this was spared him. Has not the Divine help frequently been opportune in our case? Has it not been given at junctures which have saved our reputation and re-established our fortune? 3. *The aid rendered was abundant.* We are not going to speculate as to the quantity of wine that was made at this time. But it was evident that there was sufficient to supply the wants of the guests while they remained together, as we do not read that they required any more. So the help which God has frequently given to us has been abundant, more than equal to our necessity. 4. *The aid rendered secured the commendation of those who were unconscious of it.* The governor at the feast said to the bridegroom, "Every man at the beginning doth set forth good wine, and when men have well drunk that which is worse; but thou hast kept the good wine until now," verses 9, 10. It has been like this with us many times. The Divine help has been so effectual on our behalf that many by whom we have been surrounded, seeing our happiness, have unconsciously paid homage to God.

Peterboro'.

JOSEPH S. EXELL.

“ALL men think :
Perhaps the senti
be truer had You
men mortal but themseve.

I shall first endeavour
the reason for the self-d
alludes ; after which I shal
seems to me to need the qu

Why do I not think that
that stirs within,” as Addis
do I associate the idea of n
I am the sum of the thought
me ; *I* am my soul, my spir
therefore I feel that *I* am
usually associate the idea o
his soul, his spirit. *He* is th
which appeals to my senses ;
A soul, of course, he too po
is, or does, manifests itself
organisation ; hence, I natur
and, doing so, the idea of
sented to my imagination.
the crushed form—signs of
the glazed eye, the motionl
accomplished, and to this
without exception, must arriv
the goodness thereof is as t
withereth the flower

knowledge of the thoughts and feelings themselves—have penetrated through the shell to the kernel; then, the man's spiritual nature being more real to me than his physical, I instinctively associate the idea of the person with the soul, the spirit, as in my own case; and then, as in my own case, too, feeling that the soul cannot die, I look upon *him* as immortal. So, to repeat my opening remark, I think Young's famous line should read, "All men think *most* men mortal but themselves."

BROKEN VOWS.

Some people make promises without the slightest intention of keeping them, obtaining thereby from those who do not know their character the temporary advantage which they desire. Such persons are, of course, liars of the worst order. But though cases of this kind are sadly too numerous, probably the sin of broken promises is not, in the majority of instances, of this premeditated nature. It generally proceeds, I think, from weakness of character, which manifests itself in impulsiveness or procrastination, or both combined.

1. Impulsiveness—In this aspect, the over-estimating during temporary excitement our powers of performance. Often, it must be admitted, this quality is closely allied with generosity. The man who has a cold, unfeeling disposition is seldom induced, under emotion, to give a pledge which he afterwards regrets; but the sympathising man is. An earnest appeal is made to him, or his better nature is wrought upon in some way, and under the influence of feeling he vows to do that which, when his excitement has cooled, he either finds it to be impracticable to perform, or is indifferent whether it be performed or not. But if at all possible, whatever may be the sacrifice to himself, he should carry out his engagement (excepting, of course, it involve guilt, when the sin is not in breaking but in making the promise), and not only because such a course would be right, but also because it would be politic toward himself; for nothing is more likely to teach him *discretion* in what he promises in the future than the remembrance of what his *lack* of discretion, in this respect, has cost him in the past.

2. Another proof of this weakness of character is manifested, I have said, in procrastination. The vow may not have been made under the influence of excitement, nor may there now be any intention on the part of the promiser to break it, but the man being one who seldom, if he can avoid it, does to-day a duty which he thinks he can do to-morrow, he never finds an

whom the promise was made—
only to be disappointed ; and t
promise—he is credited by the
cannot possibly judge his moti
equal want of principle as th
abide by his engagement. Th
the man who would shrink w
telling a deliberate falsehood
from one or other of these ca
We should all seek to have t
our veracity that Dr. Johnson
of a certain nobleman, “ If he
and the acorn-season failed in
to Norway for one.”

Biblical

ON JAMES THE

AFTER the death of Ja
is frequent mention in
of another James. He

the brother of John, there was another James among the apostles, called James the son of Alphæus. The question has been raised whether James "the Lord's brother" was the same as James the apostle, "the son of Alphæus;" or whether they were different persons.

There are three opinions:

1. That this James "the Lord's brother," who is so prominently mentioned in the Acts and the Pauline epistles, was an apostle, and the cousin of our Lord, the same with James the son of Alphæus.

2. That he was the son of Joseph and Mary, and not one of the original apostles.

3. That he was the son of Joseph by a former marriage, and was therefore called a brother of our Lord.

The first opinion asserts the identity between James "the Lord's brother," and James "the apostle, the son of Alphæus." According to this hypothesis, it is supposed that the word "brother" is used in a lax sense to signify "cousin." The argument by which this opinion is maintained is as follows: The brethren of Christ are stated to have been James, and Joses, and Simon, and Judas (Matt. xiii. 55; Mark vi. 3). Now, three of these names—James, and Joses, and Judas—are elsewhere mentioned as the names of the sons of Mary, the sister of the Virgin, and the wife of Clopas. We are informed that there stood at the cross of Jesus His mother and His mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene (John xix. 25); and it is elsewhere said this Mary, the sister of the Virgin, was the mother of James the Less and Joses (Matt. xxvii. 56; Mark xv. 40): consequently these two—James and Joses—were the cousins of our Lord. Again, it is maintained that Alphæus is in Hebrew the same name as Clopas;* so that James the apostle, the son of Alphæus, is the same as the above-mentioned James the cousin of our Lord: and we know that he had a brother named Judas, another of the apostles (Acts i. 13). Hence these children of Clopas, or Alphæus, and

* Winer's *Wörterbuch*—Alphæus.

Mary the sister of the Virgin—namely, James, and Joses, and Judas—are regarded as the same as those bearing the same names who are mentioned as the brethren of Christ. The names are the same, and to identify them we have only to suppose that the word “brethren” is used in an extended sense so as to include cousins.

This opinion, however, is supported by some doubtful suppositions, rests on arbitrary assumptions, and is liable to several objections.

1. It is doubtful whether Mary the wife of Clopas was the sister of the Virgin. John says: “There stood at the cross of Jesus His mother and His mother’s sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene.” Now those words may be read as mentioning four women at the cross: first, our Lord’s mother and her sister, whose name is not given; and secondly, Mary the wife of Clopas and Mary Magdalene. On this supposition, the sister of our Lord’s mother and Mary the wife of Clopas are different persons. As we learn from the other evangelists that Salome the mother of John was at the cross, some suppose that it was she who is intended by “His mother’s sister.” Besides, it is very unlikely that the Virgin and her sister would both be called by the same name.* It is also doubtful if *Ἰούδας ἰακώβου* is to be translated “Judas the brother of James,” and not rather “Judas the son of James.” And it is by no means a certainty that the names Clopas and Alphæus are identical.

2. It is an arbitrary assumption that the word “brethren” here signifies “cousins.” The word brethren is frequently used in Scripture in a metaphorical sense, but without any danger of misconception. In only two instances is it used to signify a relationship different from that of a brother. Lot is called the brother of Abraham, and Jacob the brother of Laban, whereas in reality they were merely nephews; but it

* According to this supposition, the sons of Mary the wife of Clopas were no relations to Christ; whereas James and John, the sons of Zebedee and Salome, were His full cousins.

is never once used to denote cousins.* The objection is equally strong in reference to those who are called the sisters of Christ.

3. We are informed by John that "his brethren did not believe on him" (John vii. 5). But according to the hypothesis that James the Lord's brother was the son of Alphæus, two of these brethren—James and Judas—were at that time apostles. To this objection two answers are given: First, it is not necessary to suppose that John is speaking of all the brethren of Christ, but merely of His brethren in general terms. Or, secondly, the unbelief here adverted to might have been some temporary wavering, to which even the apostles might be liable.

4. The brethren of Christ are several times expressly distinguished from the apostles; as in Acts i. 13, 14, where the apostles are mentioned first, and then the brethren of Christ (see also John ii. 12; 1 Cor. ix. 5). No great weight, however, can be put on this objection taken by itself. These are the chief objections against the opinion that James the brother of the Lord, and James the son of Alphæus are the same. This is, however, the most general opinion: it was asserted by Papias, Clemens Alexandrinus, Jerome, and Augustine among the Fathers; and is embraced by Calvin, Pearson, Eichhorn, Lampe, Schneckenburger, Gieseler, Lange, Ellicott, and Wordsworth among the moderns.

The second opinion is, that the James of the Acts was not an apostle, and was a real brother of our Lord, being the son of Mary and Joseph. Among the brethren of our Lord, there is mention of a James (Matt. xiii. 55); and Paul speaks of *Ἰάκωβον τὸν ἀδελφὸν τοῦ Κυρίου*—*James the Lord's brother* (Gal. i. 19). According to this hypothesis, these expressions are taken in their natural acceptation. There are, however, difficulties in the way of this conclusion.

1. It is opposed to the general sentiment and universal tradition of the church. Both the Western and Eastern

* If they had been cousins, we would have expected the word ἀνέψωι and not ἀδελφοί.

Churches cling to the idea that the Virgin remained always a virgin; hence the name *ἀειράρρητος* among the Greeks, and *semper Virgo* among the Latins.* The grounds of this opinion are well stated by Bishop Pearson in his *Exposition of the Creed*: "We believe the mother of our Lord to have been, not only before and after His nativity, but also for ever, the most immaculate and blessed Virgin. For although it may be thought sufficient as to the mystery of the incarnation, that when our Saviour was conceived and born His mother was a virgin; though whatsoever should have followed after could have no reflective operation upon the first-fruit of her womb; though there be no further mention in the Creed than that He was 'born of the Virgin Mary;' yet the peculiar eminency and unparalleled privilege of that mother; the special honour and reverence due unto that Son, and ever paid by her; the regard of that Holy Ghost who came upon her, and the power of the Highest which overshadowed her; the singular goodness and piety of Joseph, to whom she was espoused, have persuaded the church in all ages to believe that she still continued in the same virginity, and therefore is to be acknowledged 'the ever-virgin Mary.' "† On the other hand, those who adopt the opposite opinion hold this to be no argument, but a mere appeal to sentiment, arising from a false notion of the superior sanctity of the unmarried life. (See Luke ii. 7; Matt. i. 25.)

2. It is objected that, if Mary had children of her own, Jesus would not have recommended her to the care of John (John xix. 25—27). We consider this a strong objection. The only answer that has been given to it is, that His brethren did not then believe; but this is a feeble reply, as immediately after His resurrection we find them among the number of the disciples.

3. It is asserted that this James is expressly called an apostle: "Other of the apostles," says Paul, "saw I none,

* In the Helvetic Confession, Jesus is spoken of as *natus ex Maria, semper virgine*.

† Pearson on the Creed—Article iii.

save James the Lord's brother" (Gal. i. 19). To this two answers are given. First, it is said that the words do not imply that James was an apostle, but may be thus read: "I saw none other of the apostles, but only (I saw) James the Lord's brother." This, however, is not so natural and obvious an interpretation. It is also apparently opposed to Acts ix. 27, where it is said of the same visit, that "Barnabas took him and brought him to the apostles;" from which it would follow that Peter and James, the only two whom he then saw, were both apostles. Secondly, it is said that the word *ἀπόστολος* is not confined to the twelve, but is applied not only to Paul, but also to Barnabas (Acts xiv. 14). This lax sense of the term, however, hardly suits Paul's argument, and is certainly not the obvious meaning in the passage (Gal. i. 17—19).

4. James is here introduced by Luke without any designation. Now, with the exception of James the brother of John, who had just been slain, the only other James known to his readers, and whom he had already mentioned (Acts. i. 13), was James the son of Alphæus; and therefore, it is argued, it is more natural to suppose that he meant this James than a James unknown to his readers.

5. It is objected that, by supposing James to be the actual son of the Virgin Mary, you would introduce two sets of the same names—James, Josès, and Judas—as sons of the Virgin Mary, and sons of Mary the wife of Clopas. Not much, however, can be made of this objection, as these names were among the most common Jewish names; and, as already stated, it is a somewhat doubtful supposition that the apostles James and Judas were brothers.

The opinion that James was the son of Mary and Joseph was first started toward the close of the fourth century by a certain Helvidius, whose followers were called Helvidians or Antidicomarianitæ, and were universally regarded as heretics. *Antidicomarianitæ appellati sunt hæretici, qui Mariæ virginitati usque adeo contradicunt, ut affirmant eam post Christum natum viro suo fuisse commixtam* (Augustine). The opinion was con-

difficulties which beset the other
 for these disciples being called
 lessens the objection arising from
 mother to the care of John; *
 universal sentiment of the church
 virginity of Mary. Nevertheless
 received in modern times, and
 probably because it savours of
 supposition adopted to avoid direct
 positive arguments in its favour
 easily erroneous, and we do not
 dismissed. It was the favourite
 being held by Origen, Eusebius
 Alexandria, Epiphanius, Hilary
 and has become the generally received
 Church.†

Such are the three opinions of
 of our Lord. The third opinion
 great objection to the first opinion

• Especially if John were the full brother
 the Virgin. See above.

† This opinion is also maintained by

actually called the brothers and sisters of Christ. And the great objection to the second opinion, is the difficulty of reconciling it with John xix. 25—27 and Gal. i. 19. It is a perplexing question; it is hard to say on what side the preponderance of evidence lies; and we feel constrained to leave the matter *in dubio*. Happily it is a question of small doctrinal importance, though of considerable interest.*

James, the brother of our Lord, is frequently mentioned in the history of the church. He is there known by the name of Bishop of Jerusalem; and certainly, if not actually bishop, it would appear from the Acts of the Apostles that he at least exercised an important influence in the mother church. A long account of his character and death, written by Hegesippus, who lived about the middle of the second century, is preserved by Eusebius. He informs us that he was universally known by the name of the Just, and along with the apostles received the government of the church. He lived as a Nazarite: he drank neither wine nor strong drink, and no razor came upon his head. He was in the habit of entering the temple alone, and was often found upon his bended knees, interceding for the forgiveness of his people; so that his knees became as hard as camels', in consequence of his habitual supplication before God. He was put to death, shortly before the destruction of Jerusalem, by the fanatical Jews. His last words were: "I entreat Thee, O Lord God and Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." "Thus," concludes Hegesippus, "he suffered martyrdom, on the spot where his tombstone is still remaining, by the temple. He was a faithful witness, both

* This interesting question is discussed at length in Smith's *Dictionary of the Bible*, articles "the Brethren of Christ," and "James the Lord's Brother;" Winer's *biblisches Worterbuch*, article "Jacobus;" Pearson on the Creed—Article iii.; Lange's *Life of Christ*, vol. i. 421—437, Clark's translation; Neander's *Planting*, vol. i. 350—354; Schaff's *Apostolic History*, vol. ii. pp. 35—38; Alford's *Introduction to the Epistle of James*; Lardner's *Works*, vol. iii. pp. 368—384; Davidson's *New Introduction*, vol. i. pp. 281—284; Wordsworth on the *Acts*, pp. 99, 100; Andrew's *Life of our Lord*, pp. 97—108.

James, and some of his com-
formed an accusation against t
he delivered them to be stoned
to this account, James was mar
before the commencement of the

The Preacher's

Subject: THE FAULTLESS MAN.

"I find no fault in this man."—
Luke xxiii. 4.

Here the very judge whose
sentence doomed the Son of
God to death pronounces Him
not guilty, declares that he
finds no fault in Him. His
verdict is very significant,
and of inestimable value.
Why did he not find fault in

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—

character. He had every means of knowing all about Christ. As the governor of Judea his eyes and ears would be open to all that occurred within his jurisdiction. The prejudiced Jews, who were ever anxious to discover some impropriety in Christ, would be only too ready to carry it to Pilate if it occurred. (4) Not for the want of *motives*. He had the strongest motives to adjudge Him guilty. Cæsar, his imperial master, would have been pleased with such a judgment, for He had offended the Romans by calling Himself King; and his subjects would have been still more greatly pleased, for they hated Jesus of Nazareth. He endangered his popularity both in Judea and Rome, and risked his high position and emolument by pronouncing Him faultless. A stronger testimony could not have been uttered.

This verdict of Pilate presents three subjects for thought:—

I. THE FORCE OF CONSCIENCE. This is the utterance of conscience, a power within this judge that judged Him and compelled him to speak out; a power that proved itself for the moment stronger than his love of popularity, emolument, or position. Two remarks about this conscience. First: Its testimony is always *independent*. What it

has to say it pronounces in utter disregard to all that is dearest in this mortal life; it cares nothing for our property, our fame, our loves, our status, even our life, it will go dead against all. Secondly: Its testimony is *irrepressible*. When the time comes for it to speak, speak it must, you cannot muffle its voice. Like the subterranean fire, though it sleeps for a while under the green hills of worldly prosperity and interests, when its time comes it will break into thunder and shake the globe. Thirdly: Its testimony *should always be followed*. Well would it have been for Pilate if he had followed the testimony of his conscience! What his conscience told him, the most sceptical scrutiny of eighteen hundred years has demonstrated, the fact that He was holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners.

This verdict of Pilate presents another subject of thought, which is:

II. THE PHENOMENON OF HISTORY. What is the greatest phenomenon of human history? The existence of a *faultless* man. In the grand old Bible, taking us back through the history of many ages, I find many a noble man, but amongst the greatest moral magnates not one is faultless—Abraham, Moses, David, Peter, Paul, all blotted with defects. No

wonder therefore that the most enlightened of ancient moralists, instead of being faultless in life had but very imperfect ideas of what morality really is. In their teaching they only represent some single virtue. Cynon's grand idea of virtue was liberty; that of Leonidas, love of country; Epaminondas considered truthfulness to be everything, and Aristides thought that justice was all in all. Socrates lacked love for his wife and children; Plato and Aristotle were no enemies to sensual indulgences, and Cato is charged with cruelty to his slaves. Jesus stands alone, the faultless among the faulty. How is this to be accounted for? What other solution have you but this—that He was "the Son of God" in a special sense? This verdict of Pilate presents another subject of thought, which is—

III. THE GLORY OF CHRISTIANITY. The great want of mankind is a *perfect* man to study, to love, to confide in, to imitate; and such a character is found nowhere but in this Bible. It is not found in poetry, history, romance, but it is here. Here we have One "who was tempted in all points as we are, yet without sin." One "who did no sin neither was guilt found in His mouth." Here you have the great moral code drawn out in living cha-

racters, morality embodied in a human life.

CONCLUSION. "What think ye of Christ?"

Subject: HARVEST.

"Behold a basket of summer fruit."—Amos viii.

God teaches the world in two ways; by symbols and sayings. By this "basket of summer fruit" He taught Amos that Israel was ripe for judgment. The time has come round when what God showed to Amos He shows to us all—summer fruits. We do not see merely a "basket of summer fruit," but wag-gons, fields, granaries. "The feast of harvest" has come again. These summer fruits remind us of—

I. THE BENEFICENCE OF GOD. In the summer fruit He gives us the *useful* and the *beautiful*. In these fruits of the earth provisions are made for our physical wants. By them we live; were they for a few short years withheld our race would soon be extinct. But whilst they are made for our physical wants they minister to the wants of the soul as well. They are *beautiful* as well as *useful*. How beautiful are these fruits of the earth! Their exquisite forms, in boundless variety; their lovely tints, their bloom and gorgeous hues, how beautiful! Deep within us all is the love for the beautiful.

The God who planted within us the sentiment ministers abundantly to it in these baskets of fruit. He makes the material to minister not only to the body but to the mind as well, and chiefly so, for the world overflows with beauty.

The fruits of the earth are more to us than they are to the brutes of the field; they not only sustain our physical frames, but do a higher and nobler work; they inspire us with a sense of the beautiful in form and hue. God's beneficence in these fruits of the earth is shown to be (1) abundant, (2) unremitting, (3) undeserved. These summer fruits remind us of—

II. THE MATURING FORCES OF DIVINE GOVERNMENT. This "basket of summer fruit" is the outcome of a very long and complicate process. Snow and ice, showers and dews, clouds and sunshine, storm and calm, bleak winds of winter, genial airs of spring, and the hot breath of summer, the constant care and toil of the labourers in the fields and orchards, have all co-operated in bringing out this result. *Antecedently, this result would not have been expected.* Suppose a man in the depths of winter being told for the first time that those leafless fruit trees, shivering in the winds, and hung with icicles, should, in a few months, be loaded with

clusters of apples, and plums, and pears, and grapes, would he have believed it? The thing to him would have been incredible. I can conceive of such a man declaring it impossible, and denouncing the speaker as one attempting to impose on his credulity. *A priori* objections of the creature to anything the Creator may accomplish are presumptuous and absurd. Things will ever be occurring in God's universe upon which antecedently no finite being could calculate. Therefore, do not argue (1) against the conversion of the world, or (2) against the resurrection of the dead. All things tend to maturation. Ripening laws are acting upon every part of the creation, upon inorganic matter, upon vital organisms, upon moral character, upon human institutions. All things reach a point of ripeness from which decay sets in. These summer fruits remind us of—

III. THE DESTINED DECADENCE OF ALL ORGANIC LIFE. In that "basket of summer fruit" there is death. In a few short days it will be reduced to utter corruption. So it is with all material life: no sooner is perfection reached than decay begins. The principle is seen working through the vegetable and animal kingdom, yes, and in all human existences too. In a few short weeks after the

harvest has been reaped and the fruits gathered, death will breathe desolation over the face of the earth again. Nothing remains perfect here, in the form of life. When your body has reached the highest point of perfection, decay will set in.

CONCLUSION. Let us cultivate those seeds of truth and virtue, whose roots will strengthen with the ages, and whose fruits will never lose their sweetness and their bloom!

Subject: MAN'S DUTY TO RE-MAKE HIMSELF.

"Make you a new heart."—Ezek. xviii. 31.

"Heart," not the bundle of muscles that beat the blood through the body, but the dominant disposition of the mind, whose pulsations throb through the whole of man's active life. Every man has this moral heart, this dominant disposition that moves, masters, and moulds him. This heart of the man, without figure, is the man. "As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he," so is he to himself, to the universe, and to his Maker. Two remarks may be offered on this subject:—

I. Man morally HAS MADE himself what he is. Who gave the unregenerate man the moral heart that beats within him, the great organ that beats the vital cur-

rent through all the veins of his conscious life? Not the Creator. Look at the moral hearts that all men throughout the world possess: for they have not all the same moral hearts. The dominant disposition of some is love for sensual indulgence, of others love for money, of others love for show, of others love for power and fame. To suppose that Almighty Love and Holiness created intelligent beings to be inspired and ruled by such dispositions as these is to the last degree derogatory to the Divine character, and repugnant to all our moral intuition and *a priori* reasonings. No, man himself has created these moral hearts. This he has done by the force of his freedom as a responsible intelligence. The moral heart that God put within him at first had a disposition to love and serve Him supremely. Yes, morally sinful man has made himself. He has given himself the "stony heart," the heart that stands hard as granite against the Divine influences of love and truth.

II. Man morally is bound TO RE-MAKE himself. "Make you a new heart." First: This is not an impossible work. (1) Reason would suggest its possibility. Antecedently we should conclude it was an easier work for a moral intelligence to make a good heart than a bad one. (2) Because it would be more

agreeable to the constitution of the spirit. All moral souls throughout the universe were organised, so to speak, to be filled and swayed by supreme sympathy with the supremely good, and to be swayed by any other disposition would be contrary to its primitive instincts and powers. To make a bad heart the soul has to go against its nature ; to work with nature would certainly seem to be easier than to go against it. (b) Because God and His universe would aid the effort. Whilst the Holy One would oppose, by moral influences, the making of a bad heart, He would aid in every way the creation of a good one. Reason therefore suggests to me the possibility. (2) The *Bible implies* its possibility. Here is the command, "Make you a new heart." Here, again, is the command, "Put off as concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts . . . and put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness." And again, "Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh to fulfil the lusts thereof." And again, "Be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind." Here are Divine injunctions. Would the Infinitely Just One command His creatures to do

what He knew they had not the power to accomplish? (3) The *means appointed* indicate its possibility. There are moral means supplied by God in the Gospel for the very purpose. What are they? In one word, *demonstrations of His infinite love for sinners*. The one grand demonstration is the delivering up of "His only begotten Son" for the restoration of a guilty world. (a) Concentrated thought upon this grand demonstration is, in the nature of the case, adapted to change the heart. Whilst it is true that disposition often directs thought, thought every day weakens, modifies, creates dispositions. "As we muse the fire of feeling burns." Ah! millions of stony hearts have been transformed into flesh as they have mused on Calvary. (b) Men have the power of giving this concentrated thought. All men are thinkers, and all men are thinking upon some subjects, with more interest than on others. Children at school concentrate their thoughts, artists concentrate their thoughts, merchants concentrate their thoughts, statesmen concentrate their thoughts. Let all men for one short week concentrate their thoughts on Calvary, and what under God would be the result?

Secondly: This is an *urgently important work*. "Make

you a new heart." To make fame, power, money; these are childish trifles compared with the work of making a new heart. Your well-being here and yonder, now and for ever, is involved in this work. There are some who boast that they are self-made men. All that they can mean by it is that they are self-made builders, artists, merchants, scholars. He only is a real man who has a true heart. Set to this work, and become a self-made man in the truest sense.

CONCLUSION. Let our grand mission be to urge this work on all men. Do you say, Ah! but this is the work of God? Does He not say, "I will take away the stony heart?" Does He not say, "A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you?" Does He not say, "I will give you a heart of flesh?" True, and much more of the same import. But how does He do it? Not as He gives the light of the sun, or the fertilising showers, or the waves of vital air, irrespective of all creature efforts, but as He gives the harvest in connection with human labour, and as He gives knowledge in connection with human study. All good comes from Him, some irrespective of all creature effort, and some in connection with the voluntary agency of His creatures. To Him in all cases belongs the praise.

Subject: LABOUR.

"So she gleaned in the field until even, and beat out that she had gleaned."—Ruth ii. 17.

It is impossible to estimate the influence of life upon life. It is impossible to estimate the influence of religious life upon irreligious life. It is impossible to estimate the influence of religious life upon irreligious life through natural affection (chap. i. 16). The text teaches two truths; that

I. No labour is too insignificant for love. "So she gleaned." She was of a good family, accustomed to a life of ease and plenty. That which she does now is anything but dignified. (a) A work for the commonest powers. (b) A work for the commonest people. (c) A work whose results bear no comparison to the expenditure of labour. (d) A work in which is redone that which has been considered as done. The farmer has done; she goes over after. These imply the insignificance of her labour. Men measure the worth of work by its conspicuousness. *The real worth of work lies in meeting the necessity for its existence; and the motive which inspires it.* Two lives depend upon her toil; then her work has worth: she loves that woman for whom she toils; then her work has dignity. Her love consecrates lowest means for

highest ends. She viewed the end through the means.

II. No results of labour are too insignificant for care. She "beat out that she had gleaned." Results of labour are lost:—*When they are unseen. By careless inattention. By a false estimate of their value.* Poverty, expense of time and industry, all im-

pressed Ruth with the need of caring for results. *She kept by turning them to their legitimate use. "Beat out."*

God needs gleaners. We can all glean. What we can do, if it is right we ought to. Who intends facing God and the angel toilers without a grain from the field of life?

S. B. REES.

Pith of Renowned Sermons.

No. XXVII.—HORACE BUSHNELL, D.D.

Subject: SALVATION BY MAN.

"For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection from the dead."—1 Cor. xv. 21.

IT cannot, of course, be the apostle's meaning, that mankind are going literally to raise themselves from the dead. When he says "by man" he mentally refers to Christ; only taking advantage of the fact that, since the Son of God incarnate is become a proper man, it is permitted us to regard the power of salvation as included in humanity itself. It is an important fact that Christ is not so much to be thought of as being *external*, as a second Adam in the race itself; a regenerative power so inserted in humanity as to be, in a sense, of it. The word *since* supposes an impression felt of inherent fitness, requiring the corporate disadvantages of the fall to be made good by a corporate remedy. Consider, then—

I. The antecedent probability of such a remedy, indicated by familiar analogies.

It is God's manner to make all things largely self-remedial when attacked by disorder. The bush that is bent, as soon as it is let go springs up suddenly by an elastic force within. Cut it down and it will set to new growths by pricking through the hard bark even of its stump. Every animal body has a distinct self-medicating force in its own nature, called by physiologists the *cis medicatrix*. The same is true of all defections of character, the man must repair his losses by a process of recovery undertaken by himself; the whole world toiling at his vices and dishonours could not repair one of them. On a larger scale, the same is true of society. What, then, shall we expect when humanity is broken by sin, but that if God organises redemption, He will do it in a way to have it appear as a redemption from within, executed in a sense by man?

II. We not only want a supernatural salvation (for nothing less than that can possibly regenerate the fall of nature), but in order to have any steady faith in it we must have it wrought into nature and made to be, as it were, one of its own stock powers. What we want to satisfy, in a degree, that scientific instinct, can be seen at a glance from the eagerness that turns such multitudes of our time after the doctrine of progress. Yet there is no fiction more baseless than a strictly natural progress, for after the fact of sin the progress of the race must be (as we see it is) from bad to worse. We want a salvation that is to us all that this doctrine of progress pretends to be, and God gives us to see the general humanity so penetrated with the supernatural by Christ living in it, as to be, in a sense, working out redemption from within itself. Meantime—

III. If it were possible to restore the fall of our race by any kind of wholly external agency, supposing no concurrent struggles operating from within, it would reduce our character and grade of insignificance to a virtual nullity. But the Saviour being or becoming man, the salvation dignifies and raises man even before he receives it.

IV. Since it is continually assumed in Scripture that we

fall as a corporate whole, we naturally look for some recuperative grace to be entered into the race, by which so great a disadvantage may be repaid or overcome. True, we are not borne of Christ physiologically, but the correspondence must not be understood to hold in any but a general and qualified way. Let it be enough that as Adam is our head physiologically, so is Christ our head by the head influences He inaugurates. Good souls have a power to get into the race by collateral propagations of their goodness, when bad souls have almost no such power at all. They have a destiny of headship, becoming Adams in the sublime fatherhood of their power. And so it is, illustrating the Divine by the human, that the incarnate Word of God's eternity, coming into birth and living and dying as a man, fills the race with new possibilities and powers, starts resurgent activities, and overtops the sin abounding with a grace that so much more abounds. Consider now—

V. Some of the Scripture evidence of the subject. It declares that the seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head. The woman's whole posterity, including Christ, shall do it, God being always present in the struggle. Here and there the hidden method is departed from, and God does something for or upon our humanity and not through it, but nothing works like a power that does not work by man. Abraham's sacrifice and Jacob's wrestling bring more victory and might into the race than the brazen serpent, or the waters drawn out of the rock. When, too, Christ comes, perfect in all divinity, He gets into the common family register as man, and puts the struggle on as being a struggle of race. And when He is gone all that we know is that a gospel is born, and, though there seems nothing here but the same humanity there was before, it is a very different fight as respects the power of it. Observe how even Holy Scripture is written by man, bearing in every book the stamp of the particular mind in whose personal conception it was shaped. And the gospel of Christ is to be preached by human ministers, and the disciples are to be newer incarnations of Christ, and,

in a sense, by their gifts, prayers, and sufferings, vehicles, also, of the Spirit. "Ye are the light of the world."

We have, then, a very significant presumption raised, that when any breakage or damage occurs in any legitimate institution of the world, God has put in somewhere some kind of self-remedial force to mend it.

Again, the immense responsibility thrown upon Christ's followers. Christ lays it on them to be gossellers with Him, and to really believe is to come into the great life-struggle of Jesus. There is, furthermore, a great mine of comfort opened here, for such as have settled into heart-sickness over human affairs, and the want of all high movement in them. Lift up your heads, O ye drooping ones! Christ is in the world. He is about us, within us, going through all things, moving onward in all. Leaven does not make a noise when it works, and yet it works. No river runs to the sea more certainly or steadily than the great salvation by man runs to conquest and a kingdom.

Observe, also, the beautiful delicacy of God in His plan of salvation. He makes it not a salvation for man only, but contrives to make it, as far as possible, a salvation *by* man. True, it is all by Christ, and yet it is by the Christ within—the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus. And so, instead of making His mercy a mere pity that kills respect, He makes it a power that lifts into character and everlasting manhood. And when we shall go home to be with Christ, what shall we do but confess in lowliest homage—"Unto Him that loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood;" raising our finale, also, to sing, in the glorified majesty of our feeling, "And hath made us kings and priests unto God."

Camberwell.

W. HARRIS.

Seeds of Sermons from the Minor Prophets.

If the Bible as a whole is inspired, it is of vast importance that all its Divine ideas should be brought to bear upon the living world of men. Though the pulpit is the organ Divinely intended for this work, it has been doing it hitherto in a miserably partial and restricted method. It selects isolated passages, and leaves whole chapters and books for the most part untouched. Its conduct to the Minor Prophets may be taken as a case in point. How seldom are they resorted to for texts, and yet they abound with splendid passages throbbing with Divine ideas. It is our purpose to go through this section of the Holy Word; selecting, however, only such verses in each chapter and book as seem the most suggestive of truths, of the most vital interest, and universal application.

We begin with HOSEA. The remembrance of some facts connected with this man will greatly help us in our endeavours to reach the meaning and feel the power of certain of his utterances. He was a native of Israel, and lived in Samaria about 700 or 800 years B.C. His prophecy seems to have embraced a period of about 60 years, from Jeroboam's death to Hezekiah's ascension to the throne. He was contemporary with Isaiah, and preceded Joel, Jonah, and Amos. His prophecies are directed almost exclusively to the ten tribes who had sunk into the deepest idolatry. His style, as a writer, is very peculiar. "It is," says De Witte, "abrupt, unrounded, and ebullient, his rhythm hard, leaping, and violent." Like a bee he has been said to fly from one flower to another, to suck the honey from all the blossoms.

HOSEA.

No. XXVIII.

Subject: THE SOLEMN DAYS OF LIFE.

"What will ye do in the solemn day!"—Hosea ix. 5.

"What will ye do in the day of assembly?—when ye shall be despoiled of everything by the Assyrians; for the Israelites who remained in the land after its subjection to the Assyrians did worship the true God, and offer unto Him the sacrifices appointed by the law, though in an imperfect manner; and it was a great mortification to them to be deprived of their religious festivals in the land of strangers."—*Elzas*. The "solemn day" here evidently refers to one of the great Jewish feasts, either the Feast of the

Passover, the Pentecost, or of the Tabernacles; and the literal meaning seems to be, What will you children of Abraham do when you are deprived by tyrannic strangers of the privilege of attending those solemn assemblies? Though the word assembly would be a better rendering than "solemn," yet inasmuch as these festive assemblies were very solemn, and the deprivation of them of all things the most solemn, we shall accept the word for purposes of practical application. There are solemn days awaiting all of us, and the appeal in the text is evermore befitting and urgent.

I. The day of PERSONAL AFFLICTION is a "solemn day." The day comes either by disease, accident, or infirmities of age, when, withdrawn from

scenes of business, pleasure, or profession, we shall be confined to some lonely room, and languish on the couch of suffering and exhaustion. Such a day must come to all, and such a day will be "solemn"—a day with but little light in the firmament of earthly life, a day of darkness, and perhaps of tempests. "What will ye do in the solemn day?" What *can* you do? You will not be able to extricate yourself from the sad condition. No man can raise himself out of that physical suffering and weakness that are destined to come on his frame. What will ye do so as to be sustained in soul? Sceptical reasonings will be of no service, the recollections of past life will be of no service. "What will ye do in *that* solemn day?"

II. The day of SOCIAL BE-REAVEMENT is a "solemn day." Much of the charm of life is in our social loves, the love of partners, parents, children, friends. The time must come when ruthless death will tear them from the heart. This will be a solemn day. What a dark day with the soul is that when we return from the grave where we have left for ever some dear object of the heart, and when we enter the home where the loved one was the centre and charm of the circle. Truly, a sunless, saddening day is this. And yet such a day must come to all. "What will ye do in *this* solemn day?" What will you do for consolation? What word of comfort has science to offer, has the world to present? What will you do?

III. The day of DEATH is a "solemn day." This awaits

every man. "What man is he that liveth and shall not see death?" "There is no man that hath power over the spirit to retain the spirit, neither hath he power in the day of death, and there is no discharge in that war." What a "solemn day" is this! All earthly connections dissolving, the world receding, eternity parting its awful folds. What will ye do in *this* day, when heart and flesh shall fail? What will sustain your spirit then? Will you count your wealth? Will you gather about your dying bed your worldly companions? Will you seek to bury the remembrance of your past life? Something must be done—this you will feel; but what?

IV. The day of JUDGMENT is a "solemn day." "We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ." What a day will that be! A "great and notable" day. "Howl ye, for the day of the Lord is at hand." What will ye do? Will ye call "to the mountains and rocks to fall on you, and hide you from the eyes of Him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb?"

CONCLUSION. "What will ye do in the solemn day?" "Do!" Why, do what you should do every day of your life—exercise a practical and unbounded faith in the love of God through our Lord Jesus Christ. "I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

" 'Tis not the stoic's lessons, got by rote,
The pomp of words and pedant dissertations,
That can sustain thee in that hour of terror :
Books have taught cowards to talk nobly of it,
But when the trial comes, they stand aghast.
Hast thou considered what may happen after it ?
How thy account may stand, and what the answer ! "

Nicholas Rowe.

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No. XXIX.

Subject : CHARGE AGAINST RELIGIOUS MINISTERS.

"The prophet is a fool, and the spiritual man is mad."—Hosea viii. 7.

What the prophet means here seems to be this,—that when the predicted retribution had come Israel would learn that the prosperity which some of the prophets had predicted—(Ezek. xiii. 10), proved them infatuated fools. Although some render the expression, "the spiritual man is mad," a mad man the man of spirit, the man of the spirit is frantic, the idea seems to be the same as that conveyed in our version, viz., that the man pretending to have spiritual inspiration and prophesying was mad. We may take the words as a charge against religious ministers, and make two observations.

I. It is a charge that is *SOMETIMES TOO TRUE*. There have been religious ministers in all ages, and there are still in connection even with Christianity, who are foolish and "mad." First: There are men of *weak*

minds. There are men in the ministry utterly incapable, not only of taking a harmonious view of truth, but even of forming a clear and complete conception of any great principle. We say not a word in disparagement of men of small cerebral power and feeble understanding. Heaven made them what they are; but they were never intended for the ministry. In the ministry they do enormous mischief. Their silly sentimentalities, their crude notions, their inane conceptions, bring the pulpit into contempt. They are "fools." Secondly: There are men of *irrational theologies*. There are men who though not always naturally weak-minded, nevertheless propound theological dogmas which are utterly incongruous with human reason, and therefore un-Biblical and undivine. The doctrines that multitudes of men are predestined to eternal misery, that Christ's death procured the love of God, that all that men require to make them good and happy for ever is to believe in something that took place eighteen hundred years ago—such dogmas as these are often propounded in pulpits, and they are utterly foolish; they strike against the common sense of humanity and have no foundation in the teaching of Him who is the "wisdom of God." The prophet that talks such things is a "fool," and the spiritual man is "mad." Thirdly: There are men of *silly rituals*. The crossings, the kneelings, the bowings, the robings, the upholsterings, the grimacings, which

constitute much of the ministry of a large number of what are called Protestant ministers, justify the people in calling them fools and madmen. The outside world is constantly pointing to the pulpit, and saying, "The prophet is a fool and the spiritual man is mad." Alas! that there should be any cause for it!

II. It is a charge that is OFTEN A SCOFFING CALUMNY. The unregenerate world have from the beginning identified preaching with folly and fanaticism. The general impression to-day in England is that preachers are intellectually a feeble folk, effeminate, lackadaisical, unfit for the business of the world. Now an ideal preacher of Christianity, instead of being a "fool" or "mad," is the wisest and most philosophic man of his age, and that for three reasons. First: He *aims at the highest end*. What is that? To make himself and his fellow-men what they ought to be in relation to themselves, in relation to society, in relation to the universe, and in relation to God. Men are wrong in all these respects, and their wrongness is the cause of all the crimes and miseries of the world. Secondly: He *works in the right direction*. Where does he begin this work of moral reformation? At the heart. "Out of the heart are the issues of life." All human institutions, conduct, actions, flow from the likings and dislikings of the human heart. He deals therefore as a philosopher with the fountal sympathies and antipathies of the soul. To clear the stream he goes to the fountain, to streng-

then the tree he goes to the roots, to improve the productions of the world he works upon the soil. Thirdly: He *employs the best means*. What are the best means to touch the heart effectively, to give its sympathies a new and right direction? Legislation, art, poetry, rhetoric? No, LOVE. What love? Human, angelic? No, too weak. Divine love. Divine love, not merely in nature, nor in propositions, but in example, the example of God Himself. This is moral omnipotence, this is the Cross, this is the power of God unto salvation. Let no man say that the ideal minister is a fool; the man who *says* it is a fool.

"I saw one man armed simply with
God's Word,
Enter the souls of many fellow-
men,
And pierce them sharply as a
two-edged sword,
While conscience echoed back
his words again;
Till even as showers of fertilising
rain
Sink through the bosom of the
valley clod,
So their hearts opened to the
wholesome pain,
And hundreds knelt upon the
flowery sod—
One good man's earnest prayer, the
link 'twixt them and God."
Caroline Norton.

NO. XXX.

Subject: THE ABUSE OF
WORLDLY PROSPERITY.

"Israel is an empty vine, he
bringeth forth fruit unto himself."
—Hosea x. 1.

Were this version correct we
should have two ideas sug-

gested. First: *A fruitlessness that makes life worthless.* This empty vine produced fruit, but the fruit was worthless. A fruitless vine is amongst the most worthless of all plants. It is *unbeautiful*. Its aspect is dry, stringy, dead. It is true its foliage is luxuriant, but that is short-lived and disappointing; and it is as *inutile* as it is *unbeautiful*. What piece of furniture or art can you make of the vine tree? It is only fit for the fire. Secondly: *A fruitfulness that makes life wicked.* "Bringeth forth fruit unto himself." Whatever is produced is laid out on self-aggrandisement and indulgence.

But our version is undoubtedly faulty:—"Israel is a luxuriant vine, he putteth forth his fruit."—*Henderson*. "Israel is a running vine, it setteth fruit for itself."—*Kcil*. "Israel is a luxurious vine, whose fruit is very abundant."—*Elzas*. Israel is often represented as a vine.

"Thou hast brought a vine out of Egypt,
Thou hast cast out the heathen
and planted it,
Thou preparedst room before it,
And did'st cause it to take deep
root;
And it filled the land,
The hills were covered with the
shadow of it,
And the boughs thereof were like
goodly cedars."

Ps. lxxx. 8—10.

Our subject is the abuse of *worldly prosperity*. Some men are very prosperous, they are like the luxuriant vine. Every branch of their life clusters with fruit. Some nations are very

prosperous: England was never more prosperous than now, the sun of prosperity shines on our island home. Great Britain is just now a luxuriant vine, and its clustering branches enrich distant nations. When is prosperity abused?

I. When it is used WITH AN EXCLUSIVE REGARD TO OUR OWN SELFISH END. When men employ it. First: For *self-indulgence*. How much wealth is lavished on the pampering of appetites, and the gratification of the sensuous, the carnal, and the gross? Secondly: For *self-aggrandisement*. How much wealth is expended in order to make a grand appearance, to move through life in pageantry and pomp, and thus to gratify mere vanity and pride? All selfish use of property is an abuse of it. What we have obtained is only *common property*, which because it has come into our possession we have a right to distribute for the common weal. The right which property gives us is not the right to lay it out purely for our own selfish ends, but the right to lay it out for the benefit of our fellow-men.

II. When it is used without A SUPREME REGARD TO THE CLAIMS OF GOD. Whatever we have we hold as stewards, and unless we employ our property according to the directions of the Great Proprietor we abuse the trust. How does God require us to employ our property? First: For the *amelioration of human woes*. Secondly: For the *dispersion of human ignorance*. Thirdly: For the *elevation of the human soul*. To raise it to the knowledge, the

image, the fellowship, and the enjoyment of God.

CONCLUSION. How are we, as a nation, using our enormous prosperity? Let the increase of grand mansions, palaces of amusement, temples of intempe-

rance, worthless and putrescent literary productions, be compared with the increase of our churches, our schools, and our books of real, intellectual, and moral merit; and the humiliating answer will come.

The Pulpit and its Handmaids.

ORIGINAL SIMILITUDES.

CHRIST TRIED.—“Who will say that Christ has not been well tried? What test, during eighteen centuries, has not been applied to Him by His enemies? And yet He stands to-day in the mind of humanity, more powerful and more glorious than ever! ‘The Sun of Righteousness’ has been growing brighter in the moral heaven of human history, notwithstanding the infidel smoke of centuries. Why is this? One reason is, His character answers to the highest ideal of moral excellence that rises in the souls of men. God has so formed our moral mind that an ideal of goodness rises on its horizon as certain as the sun rises on the earth. The felt discordance between the actual and ideal is our moral misery. Ever do we struggle after the divine image.”

INDOLENCE.—“Ask me to characterise indolence, and I would say it is the drag-chain on the wheel of progress. It is the highway to pauperism. It is the incubator of nameless in-

iquities; it is the devil’s couch.”

TRUTH.—“Truth is one. No two truths either cross each other, or even run in parallel lines, keeping ever apart. They are organically related—they have one heart, throwing a common blood into all. The tree of knowledge, which grows in the garden of universal intelligence, may have branches of science without number; but all these branches, however wide-spreading or tall, meet in one trunk, and draw their life from a common root: that root is the knowledge of God in Christ.”

SCIENCE.—“Christianity is one with all true science. It is the key-note that sets all their notes to music. Our sphere is so narrow, and our ears are so deaf that some of the notes may seem discordant. Oh, for an angel’s altitude and an angel’s ear to catch all the vibrations of the great harp of truth! Christians need not be afraid of the discoveries of in-

telleet. Each true science that comes circling through our heavens is lit up by the great central sun. It is not sent to disturb the order of our system, but to add new glories to our sky, and lend a stronger light to the path of our life."

DEPRAVED INTELLECT.—"The depraved intellect is like the imprisoned bird; it has powers to mount aloft, penetrate the clouds, bask in the light of day, and survey the works of God. Christianity throws open its doors, and it goes forth into the great world of truth, feeling with the Psalmist when he exclaimed, 'My soul is delivered as a bird out of the cage.'"

FIRST IMPRESSIONS.—"First impressions are the most indelible and influential. The rich man in hell remembered his 'father's house.' The soul strikes its roots deeply into the first scenes of its life, and those roots may be as fine as the finest web, but they are stronger than adamant chain. Nothing can break the mystic fibre. Though a thousand leagues away, the soul feels their vibrations."

MEANS.—"God does not desire the misery of any man, but the happiness of all; and as He has decreed that life shall come to the earth through the sun, He has decreed that true happiness shall come to humanity through faith in Christ."

CONSCIOUS IGNORANCE.—"He who feels he knows nothing is in the surest field where intellectual laurels are won."

CHARACTER.—"The essence of the character is in the spirit.

The sin of an action is not in the outward performance, but in the motive."

LOVE.—"Love rules the intellect; what the heart loves most, the intellect most ruminates. Thought, like a conveying angel, will bring the loved one to the soul's eye a thousand leagues away. To a true disciple Christ is the grand central theme of thought."

PERSONAL CHRISTIANITY.—"Personal Christianity is not a creed, however orthodox; not a ritualism, however scriptural; not a profession, however outwardly consistent; not a service, however seemingly useful, but is Christ in man."

GOD.—"How great is God! He is the cause, the means, and the end of all things in the universe but sin, and even sin He subordinates to His own high ends."

UNHOLY PLEASURE.—"An ancient Italian author, in one of his romantic legends, tells us of a tree, many-branched, and covered apparently with delectable bunches of fruit; but whose shook that tree in order to possess the fruit, found, too late, that not fruit, but stones of crushing weight came down upon his head. An emblem this of the tree of unholy pleasure. It is many-branched, it is attractive in aspect, its boughs bend with rich clusters of what seems to be delicious fruit, the millions of the world gather round it, and, with eager hands, shake it in order if possible to taste the luscious fruit. But what is the result of their efforts? Stones come tumbling

down that paralyse the soul. 'What fruit had ye in those things whereof ye are now ashamed; for the end of those things is death.' "

HABIT.—"Habit is a cord. It is strengthened with every action. At first it is fine as silk, and can be broken with but little effort. As it proceeds it becomes a cable strong enough to hold a man-of-war steady, amidst boisterous billows and furious winds. Habit is a river. At its headspring you can arrest its progress with ease, and turn it in any direction you please. but as it approaches the ocean it defies opposition, and rolls with a thunderous irresistibility into the sea."

"MORAL GOODNESS is an emanation from God, and is to

be revered wherever it radiates, whether in the pauper's hut or the king's palace."

"WORDS here only embody and reveal the unsubstantial dreams of the mind. But speech in eternity is the organ of reality. Words there are things. They are truths made vocal."

GROWTH.—"Man in heaven is but the child matured. We shall never be greater than men. Whatever is brilliant and great for us in the future will be but the development of the germs that slumber in us now."

"WE would not take you into the little kitchen garden of any sect, but into the grand moral Canaan of truth, goodness, and God."

Homiletical Breviaries.

No. LXXIX.

Subject: GOD IN STORMS.

"The Lord hath his way in the whirlwind and in the storm, and the clouds are the dust of his feet."—Nehem. i. 3.

Peace is the centre of the universe. When the severest hurricane is beating on the earth and lashing the surface of oceans into fury, there is an absolute quiet in the centre of the deep. It is so in the universe. The God of peace is undisturbed by tempests. Albeit, He is in all storms as their master and their guide. I. He is in all MATERIAL storms. He has "his way in the whirlwind," &c. First: He *commands* them. They rise, reach their fury, and pass away at His decree. Secondly: He *uses* them. He makes them subserve the well-being of the great system of nature. II.

He is in all MORAL storms. First: He is in the conflict of man with man, Insurrections, revolutions, international wars—He has His way in them; He disclaims their authorship, but He assumes their command. He is also in all SOCIAL storms. He is in all the conflicts of families and neighbourhoods, in commerce and churches, He is in all. Second: He is in all conflicts of man with himself. Every man is subject to soul-storms, storms of passion, remorse. The Lord has His way in all those whirlwinds.

No. LXXX.

Subject: SPIRITUAL REFORM.

"Rend your hearts and not your garments, and turn unto the Lord your God, for He is merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness."—Joel ii. 13.

What does repentance involve? I. HEART ANGUISH. "Rend your heart." All true reform begins in the throes of agony. The heart is rent with remorse. It involves: II. A LIFE TURNING TO GOD. "Turn unto the Lord your God." Turn to Him (1) as the object to be supremely loved; (2) the King to be supremely obeyed; (3) the Redeemer to be supremely trusted. It involves: III. A CONTEMPLATION OF INFINITE MERCY. For "He is merciful," &c. The mercy of God is its motive. "We beseech you, brethren, by the mercy of God," &c. The mercy of God. First: Has a power to break the heart. Secondly: To form the character. Thirdly: To regulate the life.

No. LXXXI.

Subject: CREATION.

"In the beginning God created heaven and earth."—Genesis i. 1.

This simple sentence—I. Denies ATHEISM. For it assumes the being of God. II. Denies POLYTHEISM. And among its varied forms the doctrine of two eternal principles, the one good, and the other evil, for it confesses the one eternal Creator. III. Denies MATERIALISM, for it asserts the creation of matter. IV. Denies PANTHEISM, for it assumes the existence of God before all things, and afar from them. V. Denies FATALISM, for it involves the freedom of the Eternal Being.

JAMES MURPHY, LL.D.

No. LXXXII.

Subject: THE WORLD AND CHRIST.

"A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom," &c.—Luke xix. 12—27.

We have—I. The world LEFT by Christ. "A certain nobleman went into a far country." Christ was in this world for upwards of thirty-three years, but he leaves it. Observe—First: *Whither* He goes. "Into a far country." In a material sense Heaven may be a country far off from the world, but *morally* the distance is infinite. A wonderful country is Heaven. Observe—Secondly: *Wherefore* He goes. "To receive for Himself a kingdom." "He ascended up on high, He led captivity captive." On His ascension He took the throne of the universe; on His ascension all power was given to Him. II. The world IN THE ABSENCE OF Christ. First: It was left in a state of *responsibility*. "And he called his ten servants . . . and said to them occupy till I come." Secondly: In a state of *hostility*. His citizens hated him. III. The world REVISITED BY Christ. "It came to pass when he returned, having received the kingdom," &c. On His return—First: He called all His stewards to an account. Secondly: He treats them according to their conduct as trustees. He rewards some and punishes others.

No. LXXXIII.

Subject: READING.

"Give attendance to reading."—1 Tim. iv. 13.

The art of writing is as old as well as an invaluable art, though printing is a comparatively modern invention. Paul was a reader (Acts xvii. 28; Titus i. 12), and he exhorts Timothy, his son, to read. Right attendance to reading means—I. Read the BEST books. The world abounds with books, most of which are rubbish, many of which are pestilent, few only are good. A good book should be—First: *Enlightening*. It should brighten the firmament and widen the horizon of the soul. Secondly: *Truthful*. Whether in the form of fiction, history, or discussion, it should be true to the great realities of existence. Thirdly: *Suggestive*. Every page of a good book should involve much more than it expresses, and

charm the reader into fresh fields of inquiry. Fourthly: *Disciplinary*. A good book is a book that aims at disciplining both the intellect and the heart. To aid the intellect to think with freedom, force, and precision, and the heart to flow with pure loves and high aspirations. II. Read the best books in a RIGHT WAY. (1) Thoughtfully; (2) earnestly; (3) practically. If men would "give attendance to such reading" a glorious change would come over the world, a new order of things would spring up in every department of social life.

Literary Notices.

[We hold it to be the duty of an Editor either to give an early notice of the books sent to him for remark, or to return them at once to the Publisher. It is unjust to praise worthless books; it is robbery to retain unnoticed ones.]

THE REVIEWER'S CANON.

In every work regard the author's end,
Since none can compass more than they intend.

THE ETERNAL LIFE. Sermons by JAMES NOBLE BENNIE, LL.B.
London: Henry King and Co., 65, Cornhill.

HERE are fourteen sermons, the subjects of which are "The Eternal Life Manifested," "The Use and Value of the Bible," "The Unity of God the True Basis and Safeguard of the Unity of the Church," "The Universal Sin," "The Mind of Christ," "Prayer," "Holy Baptism," "Christian Charity," "Christ our Fellow-Sufferer," "The Love of God greater than a Mother's," "Divine Comfort," "Tired even to Death," "The Higher Knowledge of Man," "The Resurrection." They are the productions of an enlightened student and able expounder of Divine truth. The author is in the highest sense Evangelical, but his thoughts and language are far enough from the ordinary twaddle found in the so-called Evangelical discourses. The following paragraph is worth recording for its own sake, as well as for the sake of showing the reader what he may expect in this volume.

"There is such a thing as thinking highly of the Bible, and yet missing its true purpose; there is such a thing as putting it in the place of Christ.



still actually speaking to themselves, done with their ancestors. All living presence in the midst of them had faded that such revelations belonged only to recognition of a Present Personal God, tures, they put a description of God's cings with their nation instead of God. "this Book we may learn about God." The object of the Book was to enable them to Jehovah for themselves, that they might course with Him ; might serve Him, as as their fathers had done. They forgot Isaac, and Jacob, was still alive ; that with His creatures, and calling them to as He had ever done ; nay, that what all were anticipating and pointing to, was withdraw Himself utterly from earth, as the words of a book, but when He should manifest Himself more perfectly ; when unveil Himself and tabernacle as a man

**THE SAVIOUR AND THE SECTS. A
GOADBY, M.A. St. Ives : E. V**

**THIS sermon is founded on the parable of
gives it a very original, thoroughly la**

God's Word, and write his thoughts so clearly and forcefully, we desire ever-widening opportunities and increasing encouragements. Such men, instead of being buried in villages, should be on metropolitan hills.

THE WORKS OF AURELIUS AUGUSTINE, BISHOP OF HIPPO. Vol. VII. On the Trinity. Translated by Rev. MARCUS DODS. Vol. VIII. Sermon on the Mount Expounded, and the Harmony of the Evangelists. Translated by Rev. WILLIAM FINDLAY, M.A., and Rev. S. D. F. SALMOND, M.A. Edinburgh : T. and T. Clark, 38, George Street.

It is very interesting to know by their own writings how learned, able, and godly men, upwards of 1,500 years ago, thought on those great subjects of the Bible which are of vital moment to all men in all lands and ages. In these volumes we have the thinkings of one of the ablest men that ever lived upon those great questions. Augustine shines as one of the brightest stars in the theological constellation of human history. Here are two more of his works, making in all eight volumes, with which Messrs. Clark have blessed all English students of Theology. The seventh volume, viz., that "On the Trinity," appeared, it would seem, at first in A.D. 428, and which the author began in early manhood, and finished in old age. It is on the mystery of mysteries, in which all thoughts are lost. Still, thoughts on mysterious subjects tend to quicken, to humble, to devotionalise the soul.

The eighth volume, which is on "The Sermon on the Mount," and "The Harmony of the Evangelists," is of a more practical worth. It abounds with some splendid thoughts and fine illustrations. The publishers inform us that the issue of the third year will be "A Treatise on Christian Doctrine," and probably a "Commentary on St. John's Gospel," or the second volume of the Anti-Pelagian writings. We sincerely hope that they will be abundantly encouraged in the enterprise. Until they began their work Augustine, to most English Christians, was only a name, or an apparition at most. Messrs. Clark have opened his grave, brought him up from the tomb of ages, and given him a body and a language that will make him a presence and a power in all the theological circles of the world.

FACTS, NOT FAIRY TALES : BRIEF NOTES ON MR. MATTHEW ARNOLD'S "LITERATURE AND DOGMA." By HENRY DUNN. London : Simpkin and Marshall, Stationers' Hall Court.

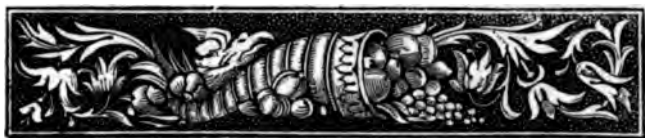
It has become common in almost all the so-called religious journals to deal out little else than abuse to Mr. Matthew Arnold. Though we cannot.

MEN. By Revs. J. OSWALD DYK
JOHN GIBB, and Professor CHAS
Stoughton, 27, Paternoster Row.

THIS volume contains four lectures, terian College, Queen's Square, to an men, the subjects of which are, "The Disbelief of some Men of Science in Unscientific," "Unbelief, Doubt, and ment." The theology here defended the "Assembly's Catechism." Each marked ability, and in a spirit of go that one has done his work better tha especially interested in the first and a

SERMONS TO CHILDREN. By the R taining numerous Anecdotes and By Rev. JAMES VAUGHAN, M.A. 78, Farringdon Street.

WERE a body of infidels to meet toge to make the next generation thorough upon a more successful method than to circulate some of the addresses give and many of the absurd hymns found i hymn books. How fanatical it is fo Christians that come out of Sunday



A Biblical Service for the Erection of Churches.

ADAPTED BOTH FOR THE DEDICATION OF THE SITE,
AND LAYING OF THE FOUNDATION STONE.*

CANTICLE.

IT is in our mind to | build an | house
Unto the name | of the | Lord our | God.^a
The Lord | give us | wisdom,
And | also | under- | standing.^b
We have found out a place | for the | Lord,
A habitation | for the | mighty | God.^c
The God of heaven He will | prosper | us ;
We His servants | will a- | rise and | build.^d

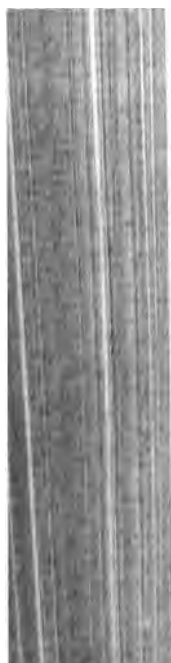
* This service is compiled for the dedication of the Site for the new church in Clapham Road, to be held on Oct. 10th, at which Sir Sydney Waterlow, Bart., Lord Mayor of London, is to preside. It is inserted here for the benefit of those ministers who often find it exceedingly difficult to conduct such services with interest and devotion. It will appear in the forthcoming edition of the "Biblical Liturgy," which contains twenty-three services on a variety of general subjects, with music printed for all the Canticles. It includes special services for Marriages, Funerals, Baptisms, &c.

^a 1 Chron. xxii. 7.

^b 1 Chron. xxii. 12.

^c Psa. cxxxii. 5.

^d Neh. ii. 20.



The house is | not for | man
But for the Lord God, | and
Except the Lord | build the
They | labour in | vain that
Who then is | willing this |
To consecrate his | service |
The God of heaven He will
We His servants | will a- |

Blessing and honour and |
Be unto him that | sitteth u
And | unto the | Lamb,
For | ever and | ever. A-

THE DIVINE AUTHORITY

Minis

Make me a sanctuary that
According to all that I show
the tabernacle: There will

the Lord of hosts, saying, This people say the time is not come, the time that the Lord's house should be built. Then came the Word of the Lord by Haggai the prophet, saying, Is it time for you, O ye, to dwell in your cieled houses, and this house lie waste? Thus saith the Lord of hosts: consider your ways, Go up to the mountain and bring wood, and build the house, and I will take pleasure in it, and I will be glorified, saith the Lord.^a

Congregation.

Who is able to build Him an house seeing the heaven and heaven of heavens contain Him? ^b

Minister.

Thus saith the High and Lofty One, that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy: I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite one.^c Where two or three are gathered together in my name there am I in the midst of them.^d

Congregation.

Who is like unto the Lord our God, Who dwelleth on high. Who humbleth Himself to behold the things that are in heaven, and in the earth! ^e

Minister.

Though the Lord be high yet hath He respect unto the lowly.^f He hath chosen Zion, He hath desired it for His habitation.^g The Lord loveth the gates of Zion more than all the dwellings of Jacob.^h

^a Haggai i. 9.

^b 2 Chron. ii. 6.

^c Isa. lvii. 15.

^d Matt. xviii. 20.

^e Ps. cxiii. 5, 6.

^f Ps. cxxxviii. 6.

^g Ps. cxxxii. 13.

^h Ps. lxxxvii. 2.

1. A Scene of

Minist

And Ezra opened the book i
ple, for he was above all the pe
it all the people stood up. An
the great God. And all the
amen, with lifting up their ha
heads, and worshipped the Lo:
ground. And they stood the
read in the book of the Law o
gave the sense, and caused the
ing.^c

Congregu

Open Thou our eyes that
things out of Thy law.^d

Minist

And Jesus came to Nazareth,
up, and as His custom was He
the Sabbath day, and stood up
delivered unto Him the book o

preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord. And He closed the book, and He gave it to the minister and sat down. And the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened on Him. And He began to say unto them, This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears. And all bare Him witness, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of His mouth.^a He taught them in their synagogue.^b He went up into the Temple and taught.^c Paul reasoned in the synagogue every Sabbath, and persuaded the Jews and the Greeks.^d

Congregation.

The God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of Glory, give unto us the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him.^e

II. A Scene of Worship.

Minister.

My house shall be called a house of prayer for all people.^f Behold, bless ye the Lord, all the servants of the Lord, which by night stand in the house of the Lord. Lift up your hands in the sanctuary, and bless the Lord.^g Praise ye the Lord; sing unto the Lord a new song, and praise Him in the congregation of saints.^h

Congregation.

We will give Thee thanks in the great congregation; we will praise Thee amongst much people.ⁱ

^a Luke iv. 16—22.

^b Luke iv. 55.

^c John vii. 14.

^d Acts xviii. 4.


^e Eph. i. 17.

^f Isa. lvi. 7.

^g Ps. cxxxiv. 1—5.

^h Ps. cxlix. 1.

ⁱ Ps. xxxv. 18.



psalms and hymns and spiritual
in your hearts to the Lord.^b N
of yourselves together, as the
exhorting one another : and so
the day approaching.^c

Congreg.

Behold how good and pleas
dwell together in unity.^d The
and abound in love one towa
men.^e

*IV. A Scene for the C
Philanth*

Minist

To what purpose is the m
unto me? saith the Lord. I s
of rams and the fat of fed be
the blood of bullocks, or of lam
ye come to appear before me,

Your new moons and your appointed feasts my soul hateth: they are a trouble unto me. I am weary to bear them. And when ye spread forth your hands I will hide mine eyes from you.^a

Congregation.

Though we bestow all our goods to feed the poor, and though we give our bodies to be burned and have not charity, it profiteth nothing.^b

Minister.

Is not this the fast that I have chosen? to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke? Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house? When thou seest the naked that thou cover him: and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh.^c Pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep thyself unspotted from the world.^d

Congregation.

Whoso hath this world's good and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?^e

THE TRUE SPIRIT OF WORSHIP.

Minister.

Keep thy foot when thou goest to the house of God, and be more ready to hear than to give the sacrifice of

^a Isaiah i. 11—15.

^c Isaiah lviii. 6, 7.

^e 1 John iii. 17.

^b 1 Cor. xiii. 3.

^d James i. 27.

God is a spirit, and they
ship Him in spirit and in t
man seeth. The Lord look

Congr

O Lord, open Thou our li
forth Thy praise.^f

Min

The sacrifice of the wicke
Lord, but the prayer of the
sacrifices of God are a bre
contrite heart, O God, Thou

Congr

Create within us clean hes
spirits within us.ⁱ

Min

Let us draw near with a
surance of faith, having ou
evil conscience.^j

Congr

Minister.

Now, our God, let we beseech Thee Thine eyes be open and let Thine ear be attent unto the prayer that is made in this place. Let Thy priests, O Lord God, be clothed with salvation, and let Thy saints rejoice in goodness.^a

Congregation.

Hear thou in heaven Thy dwelling-place.^b

Minister.

Praise waiteth for Thee, O God, in Zion ; unto Thee shall the vow be performed.^c

Congregation.

O Thou that hearest prayer, unto Thee shall all flesh come.^d

Minister.

God be merciful unto us and bless us.^e

Congregation.

Cause Thy face to shine upon us.^f

Minister.

Let the people praise Thee, O God.^g

Congregation.

Let all the people praise Thee.^h

Minister.

O let the nations be glad and sing for joy.ⁱ

Congregation.

Let the people praise Thee, O God.^j

^a 2 Chron. vi. 40.

^b 1 Kings viii. 30.

^c Ps. lxxv. 1.

^d Ps. lxxv. 2.

^e Ps. lxxvii. 1.

^f Ps. lxxvii. 1.

^g Ps. lxxvii. 3.

^h Ps. lxxvii. 3.

ⁱ Ps. lxxvii. 4.

^j Ps. lxxvii. 3.

Congregation.
And grant us Thy salvation.^c

CANTICLE.

I was glad when they said | unto | me
Let us go | into the | house of the | Lord.^d
For a day | in Thy | courts
Is | better | than a | thousand.
I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house | of m
Than to dwell | in the | tents of | wickedness.^e
Blessed are they that dwell | in Thy | house,
They will | still be | praising | Thee.^f

Sing praises to the Lord which | dwelleth in | Z
Declare a- | mong the | people His | doings.^g
We will declare Thy name | unto our | brethren
In the midst of the congregation | we will | prais
We will give Thee thanks in the great | congre-
We will praise | Thee a- | mong much | people.^h
Blessed are they that dwell | in Thy | house,

All the | days | of our | life.
To behold the beauty | of the | Lord,
And to en- | quire | in His | temple.^a
Blessed are they that dwell | in Thy | house,
They will | still be | praising | Thee.^b

Open to us the gates of | righteous- | ness,
We will go into them, and | we will | praise the | Lord.
This gate | of the | Lord
Into | which the | righteous shall | enter.^c
Enter into them | with thanks- | giving
And | into His | courts with | praise.^d
Blessed are they that dwell | in Thy | house,
They will | still be | praising | Thee.^b

Lord, we have loved the habitation | of Thy | house,
And the place | where Thine | honour | dwelleth.^e
We have thought of Thy loving- | kindness, O | God
In the | midst | of Thy | temple.^f
Those that be planted in the house | of the | Lord
Shall flourish in the | courts | of our | God.^g
Blessed are they that dwell | in Thy | house,
They will | still be | praising | Thee.^b

The Lord loveth the | gates of | Zion
More than | all the | dwellings of | Jacob.
Glorious things are | spoken of | Thee.
O | city | of our | God.^h
The Lord hath | chosen | Zion;
He hath desired it | for a | habi- | tation.ⁱ
Blessed are they that dwell | in Thy | house,
They will | still be | praising | Thee.^b

^a Ps. xxvii. 4.

^d Ps. c. 4.

^g Ps. xciii. 14.

^b Ps. lxxxiv. 4.

^e Ps. xxvi. 8.

^h Ps. lxxxvii. 2, 3.

^c Ps. cxviii. 19—20.

^f Ps. xlviii. 9.

ⁱ Ps. cxxxiii. 13.

Sing unto the Lord, | all the | earth,
 Shew forth His salvation | from | day to day ;
 Declare His glory a- | mong the | heathen,
 His marvellous | works a- | mong all | nations.^a
 Glory and honour are | in | His | presence,
 Strength and gladness | are | in His | place.^b
 Blessed are they that dwell | in Thy | house,
 They will | still be | praising | Thee.^c

Blessing and honour and | glory and | power
 Be unto Him that | sitteth up- | on the | throne,
 And | unto the | Lamb
 For | ever and | ever. A- | men.^d

THE DUTY OF ALL TO CONTRIBUTE TOWARDS THE
 ERECTION OF CHURCHES.

Minister.

David saith unto all the congregation, I have set my affection to the house of my God ; I have, of mine own proper good, of gold and silver, which I have given to the house of my God, over and above all that I have prepared for the Holy House, the gold for things of gold, the silver for things of silver, and for all manner of work to be made by the hands of artificers. Then the chief of the fathers and princes of the tribes of Israel, and the captains of thousands, and of hundreds, with the rulers of the king's work, offered willingly, and gave for the service of the house of God, of gold, five thousand talents and ten thousand drams, and of silver ten thousand talents, and of brass eighteen thousand talents, and one hundred thousand talents of iron. And they with whom precious stones were found gave them to the treasure of the house of the

^a 1 Chron. xvi. 23—24.

^b 1 Chron. xvi. 27.

^c Ps. lxxxiv. 4.

^d Rev. vi. 13.

Lord, by the hand of Jehiel the Gershonite. Then the people rejoiced, for that they offered willingly, because with perfect heart they offered willingly to the Lord: and David the king also rejoiced with great joy.^a

Minister and Congregation.

[To be said or sung.]

Thine, O Lord, is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty: for all that is in the heaven and the earth are thine; Thine is the kingdom, O Lord: and Thou art exalted as head above all.^b

Here ADDRESSES of the Chairman and others should be delivered, on such subjects as—1. *The spiritual objects to which the Building is to be dedicated.* 2. *The obligation of every lover of his country, his race, and his Redeemer, to promote such objects.* After this the subscriptions of the people are to be collected, and their promises recorded; while this is being done the following passages may be read by the Minister:—

He loveth our nation and he hath built us a synagogue.^c Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth: where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through and steal.^d

We brought nothing into the world, neither may we carry anything out.^e

To do good and to distribute forget not: for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.^f

Freely have ye received, freely give.^g

^a 1 Chron. xxix. 1—9.

^d Matt. vi. 19, 20.

^e Matt. x. 8.

^b 1 Chron. xxix. 11.

^c 1 Tim. vi. 6.

^c Luke vii. 5.

^f Heb. xiii. 16.

There is that scattereth as
that withholdeth more the
poverty.^d

He that soweth sparing
and he that soweth bountifi

The liberal deviseth lil
things shall he stand.^f

EXTEMPORA
MINISTER AN

* *

Our Father which art in
Thy kingdom come: Thy
heaven, Give us this day o
our debts as we forgive our
temptation: but deliver us
dom, and the power and
Amen.^g

E

Tune, Corde Natus. M
Mode

T at the temple —

May Thy love in all our efforts
Glow within as sacred fire.
Glow for ever, ever more.

When the top stone crowns the building
And Thy house appears, O Lord,
Let the thoughtless crowds around it
Haste to listen to Thy Word,
There to blend in high devotion
Praising Thee with one accord.
Praising ever, ever more.

Never let sect-zeal pervert it,
Narrow creed or priestly rite,
Guard its pulpit from all bigots,
Grant its preachers Christly light.
Son of God, be Thou their Leader,
Make them heroes in the fight.
Onward lead them ever more.

Let it stand for many ages
Fane of worship, home of love,
Stand a glorious school for virtue,
Training souls for realms above.
Dwell within it, Holy Father,
Never let Thy Truth remove.
Never, never, never more.

Here may numbers be illumin'd,
Unborn thousands taste Thy grace,
Let this site, Thou God of ages,
Ever be a sacred place.
Sacred to the cause of worship,
To the welfare of the race.
Sacred ever, ever more.

TO THE READER OF THIS BOOK, EVER
tribute nothing fresh in the way of evol
HOMILETIC treatment it has never yet
ourselves, determining to employ the

Our Method.—Our plan of treatm
HISTORY of the passage. Lyric poetry
character ; and the key, therefore, to
words is a knowledge of the men and
lyric pencil.—(2.) ANNOTATIONS of the
notes on any ambiguous word, phrase,
MENT of the passage. A knowledge of
most essential conditions for interpreti
passage. This is our main work. We
that have been legitimately educed, as
sermonising methods, as may promot
tions.

Subject : Fretful Envy of its Foll

“Depart from evil, and do good ;
And dwell for evermore.
For the Lord loveth judgment,
And forsaketh not his saints ;
They are preserved for ever :
But the seed of the wicked shall
The righteous shall inherit the land
And dwell therein for ever.
The mouth of the righteous speaketh
And his tongue talketh of judgment
The law of his God is in his heart
None of his steps shall slide.
The wicked watcheth the righteous

HISTORY.—See Vol. XXXII., p. 266.

ANNOTATIONS.—*Ver. 27.*—"Depart from evil, and do good." This is the substance of the whole psalm, an epitome of duty. "*And dwell for evermore.*" That is, dwell in the land, longevity.

Ver. 28.—"For the Lord loveth judgment." "Judgment" here means right. Just and right is He. The Judge of all the earth evermore does right. Because of this what follows? "*Forsaketh not his saints.*" He abides with them. He preserves them. "*They are preserved for ever,*" and because of this, "*the seed of the wicked shall be cut off.*" Elsewhere the Psalmist has said, "the righteous Lord loveth righteousness, his countenance upholdeth the upright."

Ver. 29.—"The righteous shall inherit the land, and dwell therein for ever." "They shall inherit the land, possess the land of promise by a filial right, and dwell securely and in peace for ever to eternity upon it."
—Alexander.

Ver. 30, 31.—"The mouth of the righteous speaketh wisdom, and his tongue talketh of judgment. The law of his God is in his heart. None of his steps shall slide." Lest the foregoing promises should be appropriated by the wicked, the writer lays down a standard of character by which the righteous may be tested. He is right in speech. He speaks wisely and rightly. He is right in heart. The law of God is enthroned within him. He is right in conduct. His steps swerve not from the straight path.

Ver. 32.—"The wicked watcheth the righteous, and seeketh to slay him." In the heart of the wicked there has always been, and ever will be, an antipathy to the righteous. "I will put enmity between thy seed and her seed," &c. The wicked are ever seeking to slay the righteous; if not by material weapons, by fraud, cunning, and slander.

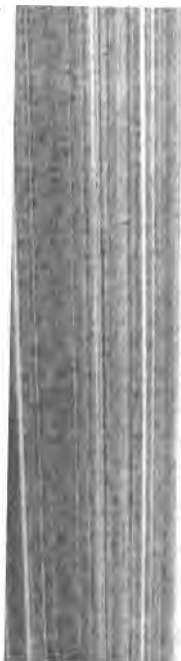
Ver. 33.—"The Lord will not leave him in his hand, nor condemn him when he is judged." The Psalmist does not mean, I presume, that it is always so, this is not a fact. Heaven has often left the righteous in the cruel hand of the wicked, hence persecutions and martyrdoms. But referring to the retributive hereafter, the words may be received as conveying an unquestionable truth.

Ver. 34.—"Wail on the Lord and keep his way, and he shall exalt thee to inherit the land, and dwell therein for ever." The first part of this verse is a repetition of the ninth verse, and the sentiment of the other part has come under our notice very frequently.

ARGUMENT.—See Vol. XXXII., page 267.

HOMILETICS. The great fact that seems to be stated in

I



life. Good in its perfect :
cern of every man should
the other, to break away
away from their bondage i
doomed Sodom. "Depart
a poisonous atmosphere, as
captivity ; struggle to get
and strive after a more s
Physician, that you may b
under the banner of Him
the devil, and break away
Good is a practical thing
discussion, but a thing for
Not the performance of :
thousand things to accomp
thing we have to do from
God. This motive makes
all acts are morally pernicious

II. SPEAKING WISDOM AND
righteous speaketh wisdom
ment." It is the character
speech is wise and just. :
tion to proceed out of his

brought to judgment. Speech is evermore a stream from a fountain either baneful or salubrious. "I am purposed," said the Psalmist, "that my mouth shall not transgress." "Set a watch, O Lord, on my mouth, keep the door of my lips." This involves—

III. RECTITUDE IN HEART AND LIFE. "The law of his God is in his heart, none of his steps shall slide." It is one thing to have the law of God in the book or the brain, and another thing to have it in the heart; to have it in the heart implies that it is cherished with love and obeyed with loyalty. It is in the heart as the moral monarch, holding empire over all the faculties of being and activities of life. Being in the heart, it directs the life. "None of his steps" (or "goings" as the margin says) "shall slide." There will be an unswerving adherence to the path of right. "The delight of the good man is in the law of the Lord, and in His law doth he meditate day and night." This involves—

IV. WAITING ON THE LORD AND KEEPING HIS COMMANDMENTS. "Wait on the Lord and keep His way." Waiting on the Lord implies (1) realisation of His presence; (2), expectation of His commands, and (3) readiness to obey. Ever should we be in this attitude, ever should the great question of our lives be, "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?" and ascertaining His will it should be ours "to keep His way" and run in the way of all His commandments. "Wait on the Lord, be of good courage, and He shall strengthen thine heart." This involves—

V. THE SPECIAL FAVOUR OF HEAVEN. To the man who eschews evil and does good, speaks wisdom and justice, is right in heart and life, waits on the Lord and obeys His commandments, three things are promised in these verses:

First: *The special guardianship of God.* "The Lord loveth judgment and forsaketh not His saints, they are preserved for ever." Secondly: *Deliverance from the power of the wicked.* "The Lord will not leave him in his hand, nor condemn him when he is judged." The truth of this is realised in the experience of all good men after death. They then enter a

realm "where the wicked cease from troubling and the weary are at rest."

Thirdly: *Exaltation and long life.* "He shall exalt thee to inherit the land." "With long life will I satisfy him and grant him my salvation."

CONCLUSION. Thus we have here a sketch of moral excellence, and should not this be the grand pursuit of every man? and if so, where is the room for envy towards the wicked? To pursue excellence is the mission of life, a mission so sublime as to raise us infinitely above all such miserable passions as envy towards our fellow-men.

Homiletic Sketches on the Book of Job.

The Book of Job is one of the grandest sections of Divine Scripture. It has never yet, to our knowledge, been treated in a purely Homiletic method for Homiletic ends. Besides many learned expositions on the book found in our general commentaries, we have special exegetical volumes of good scholarly and critical worth: such as Drs. Barnes, Wemyss, Mason Goode, Noyes Lee, Delitzsch, and Herman Hedwick Bernard: the last is in every way a masterly production. For us, therefore, to go into philology and verbal criticism, when such admirable works are available to all students, would be superfluous, if not presumption. Ambiguous terms, when they occur, we shall of course explain, and occasionally suggest an improved rendering: but our work will be chiefly, if not entirely, Homiletic. We shall essay to bring out from the grand old words those Divine verities which are true and vital to man as man in all lands and ages. These truths we shall frame in as order as philosophic and suggestive as our best powers will enable us to do; and this in order to help the earnest preachers of God's Holy Word.

Subject: Job's Argument with his Three Friends. (2) The maxims he quotes against the doctrine that God treats men here according to character.

"With him is wisdom and strength,
He hath counsel and understanding.
Behold, he breaketh down, and it cannot be built again;
He shutteth up a man, and there can be no opening.
Behold, he withholdeth the waters, and they dry up;
Also he sendeth them out, and they overturn the earth.
With him is strength and wisdom:
The deceived and the deceiver are his.

He leadeth counsellors away spoiled,
And maketh the judges fools.
He looseth the bond of kings,
And girdeth their loins with a girdle.
He leadeth princes away spoiled,
And overthroweth the mighty.
He removeth away the speech of the trusty,
And taketh away the understanding of the aged.
He poureth contempt upon princes,
And weakeneth the strength of the mighty.
He discovereth deep things out of darkness,
And bringeth out to light the shadow of death.
He increaseth the nations, and destroyeth them :
He enlargeth the nations and straiteneth them again.
He taketh away the heart of the chief of the people of the earth,
And causeth them to wander in a wilderness where there is no way.
They grope in the dark without light,
And he maketh them to stagger like a drunken man."

—Job xii. 13—25.

EXEGETICAL REMARKS.—*Ver. 13.*—"With him is wisdom and strength, he hath counsel and understanding." For "him" read "God," as in the margin. Whatever may be the wisdom of the ancients, it is but a spark to His. Some suppose that from this passage to the end of the chapter is a quotation from some old Idumean poem containing maxims that had been handed down from the wise men of the past. Anyhow, whether they are original or quotations, Job's aim is manifest—viz., to bring his so-called friends to study God in His works, and to impress them, perhaps, at the same time that he was not ignorant of the sublimity of that God of Whom they had talked with so much grandeur and assurance.

Ver. 14.—"Behold he breaketh down, and it cannot be built again." Who can repair what He pulls down? "We may now refer to such illustrations," says Barnes, "as Sodom, Babylon, Petra, Lyra, Herculaneum, and Pompeii." "He shutteth up a man and there can be no opening." Who can doubt this? He has often involved men in embarrassments from which they could not extricate themselves. He shuts up all in the grave.

Ver. 15.—"Behold, he withholdeth the waters, and they dry up." "It is remarkable," says a modern expositor, "that in the argument here there is no allusion to any historical fact: not to the flood, not to the destruction of Sodom, or the passage through the Red Sea, though these occurrences would have furnished appropriate illustrations to the point under

discussion, a strong proof of the antiquity of the book. The waters inundate the earth. Such inundations may have occurred in the swollen torrents of Arabia."

Ver. 16.—"*With him is strength and wisdom, the deceived and the deceiver are his.*" The first clause is a repetition of thirteenth verse. The meaning of the last clause is that all minds are under His control; the impostor and his dupe.

Ver. 17.—"*He leadeth counsellors away spoiled, and maketh the judges fools.*" He confounds the wisest men, and often ruins the greatest by means of their folly. "*Quem Deus vult perdere prius dementat.*"

Ver. 18.—"*He looseth the bond of kings, and girdeth their loins with a girdle.*" The meaning of this is, He strips kings of their authority and binds them as prisoners to the car of the conqueror.

Ver. 20.—"*He removeth away the speech of the trusty, and taketh away the understanding of the aged.*" "He depriveth orators of their eloquence, and the discretion of the aged He taketh away."—*Euseb.* For "speech of the trusty" the margin has "lip of the faithful."

Ver. 21.—"*He poureth contempt upon princes, and weakeneth the strength of the mighty.*" Margin, "Looseth the girdle of the strong." "The Orientals wore loose flowing robes, which were secured by a girdle round the loins. When they laboured, ran, or travelled their robes were girded up. But this is common everywhere. Wrestlers, leapers, and runners put a girdle around them, and thus are able to accomplish much more than they otherwise could. To loosen that is to weaken them. So Job says that God had power to loosen the strength of the mighty."

Ver. 22.—"*He discovereth deep things out of darkness, and bringeth out to light the shadows of death.*" The idea here is that God brings to light things that are hidden in the profoundest regions of impenetrable darkness.

Ver. 23.—"*He increaseth the nations, and destroyeth them: he enlargeth the nations and straiteneth them again.*" The rise, growth, and ruin of nations are predicted.

Ver. 24.—"*He taketh away the heart of the chief of the people of the earth, and causeth them to wander in a wilderness where there is no way.*" The word "heart" here means intelligence, and the idea is that He deprives the rulers of the people of their wisdom, so that they wander as in an inextricable wilderness of perplexity.

Ver. 25.—"*They grope in the dark without light, and he maketh them to stagger like a drunken man.*" Stripped of their wisdom they wander in gloom and stagger like drunken men.

HOMILETICS. Perhaps Job uses this lofty language concerning God for two reasons. First: To show that he could speak as grandly of the Eternal as his friends had spoken. They had often given to him sublime descriptions of the nature and operations of their Maker; and peradventure they did this to impress the patriarch with their mental superiority. Job here shows that he can match them in this respect; his strains are as lofty as theirs, and his ideas as philosophic and grand. Secondly: To show that he had as correct and extensive a view of God's agency as they had. He gives them to understand that he sees God working everywhere. He gives them here at least six different ideas of God's agency.

I. That it is **ACTIVE BOTH IN THE MENTAL AND THE MORAL WORLD.** He speaks of the Almighty not only as withholding the waters, drying them, and sending them out that they would overturn the earth, but as acting in the mental domain with the "deceived and the deceiver," taking away "the heart of the chief of the people," so that they are confounded. Sublime thought! God acts in matter and in mind: He is in the floating atom and the passing thought.

II. That it is **DESTRUCTIVE AS WELL AS RESTORATIVE.** "Behold, He breaketh down and it cannot be built again." By storms, pestilences, volcanoes, He works destruction in the material world, and by other influences He builds up. So in the mental world: He is working destruction, breaking down all antagonism to virtue and truth, and building up spirits in true love and faith.

III. That it **EXTENDS TO INDIVIDUALS AS WELL AS TO COMMUNITIES.** "He shutteth up a man, and there can be no opening." He acts with the individual man; He does not overlook the parts in the whole, the unit in the million. He acts in and by and for the individual. But with vast communities, too; their "counsellors," their "kings," their "princes," and their "nations."

IV. That it is **ABSOLUTELY SOVEREIGN AND RESISTLESS.** In all He is free, uncontrolled, and irresistible. No one can

build up what He has broken down, no one can open the place where He hath shut up a man. No one can prevent Him from bereaving counsellors of their wisdom, confounding monarchs, and breaking up kingdoms. He is sovereign lord of all, doing "what seemeth good in His sight," &c.

V. That it OPERATES IN THE UNSEEN AS WELL AS IN THE VISIBLE. "He discovereth deep things out of darkness, and bringeth out to light the shadow of death." He works in depths into which no eye can penetrate, and brings out to the light of the universe things that have never entered into the heart of man to conceive. His agency is the great developing force of the universe.

VI. That it IN NO CASE APPEARS TO RECOGNISE MORAL DISTINCTIONS AMONGST MEN. Not a word does Job here say about the righteous and the wicked in relation to God's agency. His grand object being to show that God did not treat man on the ground of moral character.

CONCLUSION. This language of Job may well be commended to the study of those modern scientists who ascribe all the phenomena, both of the material and moral universe, to certain fixed and immutable laws. Job traces all to a personal agency. This, I confess, is far more satisfactory to my intellect and more uplifting to my soul. The language may also be commended to the study of those who are everlastingly cunting about the intellectual progress of the race, and who are disposed to look back on past ages as periods of mental dulness and gloom. Who of your poets, sages, or preachers can give utterance to sublimer things than those contained in this passage of Job?

"RELIGIOUS ERRORS are soul troublers. Like the mystic star of the Apocalypse, which, falling on the waters, turned the peaceful element into turbulence and blood, they stir the spirit of the church into distressing agitations." Errors are like waves, they rise and roll, and break upon the shore. But truth, like the great ocean itself, remains calm in its great heart, imperishable and immutable from age to age."

Sermonic Glances at the Gospel of St. John.

As our purpose in the treatment of this Gospel is purely the development, in the briefest and most suggestive form, of Sermonic outlines, we must refer our readers to the following works for all critical inquiries into the author and authorship of the book, and also for any minute criticisms on difficult clauses. The works we shall especially consult are :—"Introduction to New Testament," by Blank ; "Commentary on John," by Tholuck ; "Commentary on John," by Hengstenberg ; "Introduction to the Study of the Gospels," by Westcott ; "The Gospel History," by Ebrard ; "Our Lord's Divinity," by Liddon ; "St. John's Gospel," by Oosterzee ; "Doctrine of the Person of Christ," by Dornor ; Lange ; &c., &c.

Subject : Christ's Vindication of Himself against the Charge of Blasphemy. (1) The Nature of His Authority.

"Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he not only had broken the sabbath, but said also that God was his Father, making himself equal with God. Then answered Jesus and said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do : for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise. For the Father loveth the Son, and sheweth him all things that himself doeth : and he will shew him greater works than these, that ye may marvel. For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them ; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will. For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son : that all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son, honoureth not the Father which hath sent him. Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation ; but is passed from death unto life. Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God : and they that hear shall live. For as the Father hath life in himself, so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself ; and hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man. Marvel not at this : for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth ; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life ; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation. I can of mine own self do nothing : as I hear I judge ; and my judgment is just ; because

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I seek not mine own will, but the will of my Father which hath sent me. If I bear witness of myself, my witness is not true."—John v. 18—31.

EXPOSITION. *Ver. 18.*—"Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he not only had broken the Sabbath, but said also that God was his Father, making himself equal with God." "That God was His Father," *πατέρα ἑαυτοῦ*. It means that God was His own Father. The Jews considered that this claim meant His making Himself equal with God, and that therefore He was a blasphemer. Christ does not deny their interpretation, but proceeds to vindicate His claim to the high distinction. In this they discovered another reason for putting Him to death: for the law authorised the infliction of capital punishment not only for Sabbath-breaking, but for blasphemy as well.

Ver. 19.—"Then answered Jesus and said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of himself." Christ here denies all action independent of His Father. He neither originates or pursues a course of conduct either in rivalry or apart from the Father. Their spirit and aim are identical. "But what he seeth the Father do: for what things," &c. The meaning is, the Son doeth the same in the same way, or after the same fashion. Can there be a stronger assertion of His equality with the Father than this? I see not how, after language of this kind, I can reject the Divinity of Christ, and not denounce His untruthfulness and profanity. If I hold His moral excellence I must hold His Divinity.

Ver. 20.—"For the Father loveth the Son." *φιλεῖ* is a word which denotes rather affection for the person than for the character. "And sheweth him all things that himself doeth." Love is ever communicative and confiding, it has an instinct to reveal its deepest thoughts and aims to its object. "And he will show him greater works than these." "And greater works than these shall He show Him."—*Alford*. What are the "greater works"? Those undoubtedly referred to in the subsequent verses (21, 22): those which Stier calls "*God's Regalia*."

Ver. 21.—"For as the Father raiseth up the dead and quickeneth them," &c. "One act in two stages, the resurrection of the body, and the restoration of life to it. This surely is the Father's absolute prerogative, if He have any." "Even so the Son quickeneth whom he will." Not only doing the same divine act, but doing it as the result of His own will, even as the Father does it. This statement is of immense importance in relation to the miracles of Christ, distinguishing them from similar miracles of prophets and apostles, who as human instruments were employed to perform supernatural actions, while Christ did all—

Sermonic Glances at the Gospel of St. John. 219

as the Father's commissioned servant indeed, but—in the exercise of His own absolute right of action."—*Brown.*

Ver. 22.—"For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son." Christ saith here, Neither doth the Father judge any man, but hath committed all judgment administration unto His Son. *Ver. 23.*—"That all men should honour the Son even as they honour the Father." Theology of the Divine administration. "The Father manifests Himself in the acts of the Son, because He manifests Himself in the being of the Son. And the acts of the Son unfold themselves in the total works of salvation and judgment, to the end that the Son may be honoured and glorified as the Father, in order that the Father may be glorified in Him." "*He that honoureth not the Son,*" &c. "Spoken most especially against the Sanhedrists."—*Lange.*

Ver. 24.—"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on Him that sent me, hath everlasting life," &c. "*Verily, verily.*" St. Augustine says these words were at that time an oath. The idea of the verse is, that he who accepts My doctrines, and trusteth Him Who sent Me, shall realise his well-being for ever. "*And shall not come to condemnation, but is passed from death unto life.*" Faith in Him as the messenger of the Almighty Father effects this glorious transition.

Ver. 25.—"Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live." The death here evidently refers not to the corporeally dead, as in the 29th verse, but to the spiritually dead. For it is said, "*The hour is coming and now is.*" The soul-quickenings era of the Gospel has come when all who will believe on Me, the Son of God, "shall live."

Ver. 26.—"For as the Father hath life in himself, so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself." What do these words import but this—That the Eternal Father, the Absolute Fountain of life, has endowed Christ with a life with which to quicken humanity? "*As Thou hast given Him power that He may give eternal life to as many as believe on Him.*" The logos is life. He is the life, John xi. 25. The eternal life, 1 John v. 20. The life which is the essence of God. He is the communicator of life, John i. 54.

Ver. 27.—"And hath given authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man." "This seems to confirm the last remark that what Christ had properly in view was the indwelling of the Son's essential life in humanity as the great theatre and medium of divine display in both the great departments of His work—life-giving and judgment. The

appointment of a judge in our own nature is one of the most august and beautiful arrangements of divine wisdom in redemption."—*Dr. Brown*. "Marvel not at this"—that is, at the appointment of the Son as the great Judge of humanity.

Vers. 28, 29.—"For the hour is coming in the which all that are in their graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth." This points to a period often referred to in the sacred volume, John xi. 43, 44; Dan. xii. 2; 1 Cor. xv. 20—58; Rev. xxii. 15. We subjoin the following remarks from Van Doren:—"The same person, but not the identical body, will be raised (*Locke*). Cannot literally be the same body. (1) Science shows that in seven years the human body has so totally changed that not one atom remains: so that a man seventy years of age has had ten bodies. (2) Shows that immediately after death the various particles begin to liberate themselves and mix up as parts of other bodies. (3) In Oriental lands the dead are burned, not buried, and in process of combustion the greater portions of the body pass off in gases, to mingle with other forms of existence. (4) In the case of cannibals the parts of the body eaten assimilate with and become integral portions of other human bodies. St. Paul says, 'Thou sowest not that body that shall be.' What the Bible calls the resurrection body takes place at death (*Bush, Maurice*). In the buried body exists an indestructible germ (*Origen, Watts, Drev*). An immortal bone—*Ancient Jews and others*. A monad (*Leibnitz, Goethe*). In the spirit lies an ideal form of the body (*Lange*)."

Vers. 30, 31.—"I can of mine own self do nothing, as I hear I judge: and my judgment is just," &c. "I can of—or from (ἐκ)—mine own self do nothing"—apart from, or in rivalry of, the Father, and in any separate interest of my own. "As I hear, I judge; and my judgment is just," &c. My judgments are all anticipated in the bosom of my Father, to which I have immediate access, and by Me they are only responded to and reflected. They cannot therefore err, since I live for one end only, to carry into effect the will of Him that sent Me (*Dr Brown*).

HOMILETICS. The passage we have under consideration constitutes a part of our Saviour's defence against the charge of blasphemy. The whole defence has something like a logical arrangement. In the first part, extending over the whole of the verses before us, He states the *nature* of His authority; in the second part, running on to the end of the chapter, He points to the *proof* of His authority. Under the

first head He claims five things: A special *unity* with the Father, the special *affection* of the Father, the special *revolutions* of the Father, the special *prerogatives* of the Father, and special *devotion* to the Father.

(*To be continued.*)

Germs of Thought.

Subject : Greatness.

"Then came to him the mother of Zebedee's children, with her sons, worshipping him, and desiring a certain thing of him."—Matt. xx. 20—23.

THERE is one principle lying very deep in our nature, the ministry of which is essential to bring about our restoration to God and to happiness. To that thing we give different names; sometimes we call it ambition, and it is ambition in the proper sense of that term; at other times we call it aspiration; we call it also love of progress, and thirst for glory. That there is such a thing in our nature we know by our own consciousness, and by its effects on others. Perhaps it is more proper to say that this is the general tendency of *all* the faculties of the mind, than to say that it is a *distinct* power or principle. Every attribute in the soul of man has in it what may be called the germ of hope; it is always hoping, always expecting.

When the Son of God came to man, he recognised the reality and worth of this tendency, and gave instructions how it should be directed and consecrated to its proper and legitimate use. It appears to me that the first thing Jesus did by His intercourse with His disciples was to excite hope; Christ set the people aspiring, they were all thirsting after some refreshing springs of which they had not hitherto partaken;

and the next thing Jesus did was to attach this aspiration, to fix their hopes on Himself.

I. FALSE GREATNESS IN RELIGION.

1. *It borrows its model from the world.* It makes the outward world its standard, that is the idea. This is a principle which, although taught by Christ with diligence and tears, has never yet been fully exhibited or believed.

What is the world's greatness? He gives it—"Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them, but it shall not be so among you."

What is greatness? wherein does it consist? In the possession and exercise of power, that is admitted by all. The heathen idea of greatness, as seen in the Assyrian, Persian, Grecian, and Roman empires, is to fight, and establish tyranny and despotism. Despicable! And yet this is the greatness that the followers of Christ boast about in the nineteenth century.

In worldly greatness: (1) The governing power was thoroughly alienated from God; (2) Material power was the only principle employed; (3) All this governing was a failure.

2. *Aspiration after false greatness is often found associated with genuine piety.*

Who was Mary? a pious woman. Who were James and John? followers of Jesus; and yet the three were false in their views of glory. This should teach us consideration, because men, on account of the narrowness of their minds, or educational prejudices, or conventional influences, or associations with books or persons, cannot think that religion can rise unless it glitters and blazes before the eye of sense. Let us tell them the truth, and say, you know very little, but you are sincere, as sincere as James and John and Mary were when they went to Jesus for preferment, but you understand the matter as little as they did.

3. *That aspiration after false greatness is to be attributed mainly to ignorance.*

Christ said, "Ye know not what ye ask;" you mean no wrong, you wish to be connected with and devoted to me, but you know not what you want, for such a throne as you expect will never be, and such grandeur as you are seeking is not mine to give.

They were ignorant of two things: (1) Of the character and constitution of the kingdom of Christ.

(2) Of those dispositions which are necessary in order to obtain preferment in it.

He took a little child and put him in their midst, saying, If you wish to be My disciples, you must be like this child. We are infinitely too busy as disciples of Christ, as to who shall be first. We should put such questions as these: Am I ready to drink Christ's cup, if He were to put it in my hand? Am I ready to be baptized with the baptism of Christ, if He call on me to do so? Believe me, brethren, these are the things that should occupy our attention more than they do.

4. *Aspiration after false greatness is the cause of divisions in the Church.*

"And when the ten heard it they were moved with indignation against the two brethren." They were indignant, because they reasoned thus: If these two men are chief ministers, we must be inferior, and what right have they to be before us? A great deal of the anger in God's church has been excited by this petty love of power. "It shall not be so among you."

II. TRUE GREATNESS IN RELIGION.

1. Christ is the model of spiritual greatness.

The Son of man came to serve and to die, so serve ye one another; the Son of man is to be a king, though not in the sense you imagine; the Son of man is to distribute honours and rewards, though not in a temporal sense; He gives only to those who are qualified by divine appointment and operation.

The greatness of Christ manifests itself: (1) In His aim; (2) In His ministry; (3) In His sufferings.

HIS AIM:—When Christ came into the world, He had evidently something very great in view. What did He come for? I answer, He came to seek the perfection of the spirit of man—that was His aim. He said, “I will revolutionise all humanity, I will set the world on fire, I will raise man to myself, and then present him without spot or blemish before the eternal throne of God.” His object was not to modify and adorn, and improve the external condition of man, but at once to reach the soul—the true self—and raise him up to God, justified, beloved, washed, perfected. This is not new to us as a sentiment, and yet perhaps as a reality, as a living truth, it has not the proper influence on our minds.

HIS MINISTRY:—His public life, short though it was, stirred the world to its inmost depths. Christ came not to be served; then that is not greatness; but who believes it? Did the world serve Christ? He refused the world’s service. Did wealth serve him? Let His own words reply—“Foxes have holes,” &c. Did governments serve Him? His trial in the ecclesiastical court of the Jews, and His final condemnation by the civil court of the Gentiles, answer. Did the schools serve Him? Let universal history reply: “Stumbling-block and foolishness.” (1) He knew the service of the world was of little worth. (2) He knew that the price for it was too high.

If we are candidates for worldly honour—truth, devotion, piety, and peace must go. “The friendship of the world is enmity against God.”

HIS SUFFERINGS:—“And to give His life a ransom for many.” I must leave the subject by saying that we ought to look at the death of Christ as a great victory. He fell, it is true, but He triumphed when He fell. Jesus said, “The redemption of man will cost Me My reputation, My liberty, and My life, but I willingly give them all.” Look to Calvary. Here is the victory of spirit over flesh, of patience over cruelty, of divinity over humanity; here we see the triumph of the soul over the senses, and of love over selfishness. This was greatness indeed!

Jesus apparently did not succeed. The opinion of the world was that He failed because He fell, but His fall was only that He might raise others to glory, honour, and immortality.

May God sanctify these thoughts for our instruction through Jesus Christ. Amen.

THE LATE CALEB MORRIS.

Subject: Thomas's Confession of Faith.

"My Lord, and my God."—John xx. 28.

THOMAS ranks seventh in the list of the apostles, and is usually coupled with Matthew (Matt. x. 2; Mark iii. 18; Luke vi. 15). All that we know of him is derived from the Gospel of St. John (John xi. 16; xiv. 5; xx. 25). He seems to have been a man of honest intention, and ardent love for his Master, but slow to believe, and too much swayed by regard to external forms and relations. The last glimpses we get of him are at the Sea of Galilee, with the seven disciples (John xxi. 2), and again at the gathering of the apostles after the Ascension (Acts i. 13).

In the Church, Thomas is best known as *the disciple that doubted*; but would it not be well to think of him more as a true and devoted servant of the Cross, and one whose last recorded words contain the noblest confession of our Lord's divinity uttered by apostolic lips—"My Lord and my God"? These words imply—

These words imply—

I. *Joyful recognition.* Partings are painful. When Paul bade farewell to the elders of Ephesus they sorrowed most of all for the words which he spake, "that they should see his face no more" (Acts xx. 36—38). But the grief of the disciples was relieved by hope. "Ye now therefore have sorrow, but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you" (John xvi. 22). This was fulfilled at the resurrection. "Then were the disciples glad

when they saw the Lord" (John xx. 20). But Thomas did not at first share this joy (ver. 24, 25), would not believe on the word of the disciples; tortured with doubts and fears; no rest. Again the first day of the week dawns. Again the disciples gather together, and this time Thomas is with them. Again Jesus appears and renews His loving salutation, "Peace be unto you." Then, turning to Thomas, for He knew all, with infinite condescension and tenderness He says, "Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand and thrust it into my side: and be not faithless but believing." But Thomas seeks not now such proofs. His doubts are gone. In an ecstasy of love and remembrance he cries out, "My Lord and my God." So it is in the experience of all true disciples. The sight of Jesus gives peace. Every new revelation of His glory awakens fresh joy. But not so with all men. Recognitions are not always joyful. It is not a pleasant thing for the criminal to see the man enter the witness-box who can convict him. Ahab shrank from meeting Elijah (1 Kings xxi. 20). The demons trembled in the presence of Christ, for they knew His power (Matt. viii. 29; Mark i. 24). So there will be dismay and horror when Christ shall come again in His glory (Rev. i. 5; vi. 15, 16).

But it is different in the meeting of friends and loved ones: Peter (Acts xii. 14—16); Paul and the brethren (Acts xxviii. 15); Jacob and Joseph (Gen. xlv. 26; xlv. 30—"Now let me die since I have seen thy face, because thou art yet alive"). So Thomas, so all true disciples, rejoice in Christ, who though He was dead, is alive again, and crowned with glory and honour.

"I know whom I have believed."

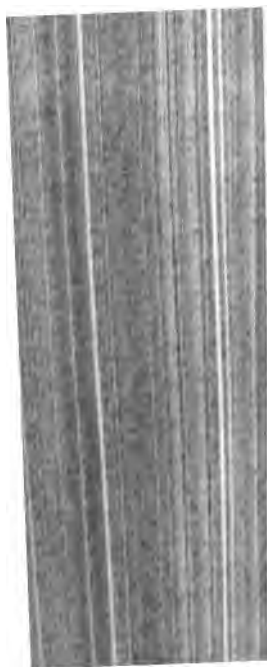
II. *Divine homage.* Friends rise in our estimation as we know them better. Love tested by trial. Suffering and death reveal the soul. Perhaps we never see so clearly the greatness of our friend as when he is taken from us. (David and Jonathan.) So it seems to have been with the disciples of Jesus. Loved Him as a friend, trusted in Him as a prophet,

believed on Him as the Messiah, beheld glimpses of His glory as the only-begotten of the Father, but it was only perhaps after His resurrection that they recognised the fulness of His glory, and bowed their hearts to Him as God. "My Lord and my God." What a testimony to the Divine greatness of Jesus! It is written, "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God." When the heathen offered such worship to Paul, he shrank from it with horror (Acts xiv. 14, 15). When the devout Cornelius offered such worship to Peter, though but in form, he recoiled, for it was not for man (Acts x. 25). When an apostle offered such worship to an angel, he would not have it, but said, "See thou do it not, for I am thy fellow-servant. Worship God" (Rev. xxii. 9). But when Thomas in his enthusiasm offered such worship to Jesus, He, "the meek and the lowly in heart," receives it as His right. Oh what joy, that we may let our whole heart go forth to Him in love, and trust, and adoration. This is the very spirit of heaven (Heb. i. 6; Rev. v. 12—14; Phil. ii. 10).

III. *Appropriating faith.* "My," a little word, but of deep significance. Only a person can say "My;" it implies relationship, right of property, personal love: "my home," "my book," "my master," "my wife," "my child." Suppose the cry is raised, "A ship on the rocks!" Every heart touched; but what are the feelings of others compared with those of the mother, who knows that her only son is in peril of death.

There is a stir in the streets of Capernaum. The crowd that follows Jesus say among themselves, "There is a child dying in the house of the ruler of the synagogue." But how different their pity from the intensity of personal love which the father expresses in his appeal to Jesus, "My little daughter lieth at the point of death: I pray thee come and lay thine hands on her, that she may be healed," Mark v. 22. "My" may embody the deepest grief or joy.

Remember David's bitter cry, "O my son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom! would God I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son!" 2 Sam. xviii. 33. Compare with



James ii. 19; 1 John v. 1

Mark the difference between believers in historical Christ and those who say, "The Lord He is God," Christ for oneself, saying, "says the marrow of the Gospel is our."

IV. *Self-surrendering Love* unto God," Rom. vi. 13. When this is done are we truly content for ever. The sight of Jesus is the pain of sin, but His love is the cure. There will be the humbleness, but His gracious word is the consciousness of unworthiness yet befall, but His sweet powerful love assures us of His reason, our conscience, our faith, the testimony of the faithful, the thousand voices of the redeemed, the claims of Jesus, and in assurance and will be our highest blessing and will be our highest blessing to Him wholly and for ever.

Happy those who are able in truth to say "My Lord and my God," Matt. xvi. 17; 1 Cor. ii. 10; 1 John v. 1—5. Here is the true bond of union, 1 Cor. i. 2; 2 Cor. x. 7.

Here is the noblest inspiration of life, 2 Cor. v. 14. Strength for work. Comfort in trouble. Hope in death, 2 Tim. iv. 6—8. Here is what gives eternity itself its chief interest and joy. There we shall behold the King in His beauty. And when we shall see Him as He is and shall be like Him, with what ecstasy of love and gratitude and joy shall we cry, "*My Lord and My God.*"

Abernethy.

WILLIAM FORSYTH, M.A.

WEEK-NIGHT SKETCHES ON THE FIRST BOOK OF SAMUEL.

No. XII.

Subject: The Immediate Consequences of a National Rejection of God.

"Then Nahash the Ammonite came up, and encamped against Jabesh-gilead: and all the men of Jabesh said unto Nahash, Make a covenant with us, and we will serve thee. And Nahash the Ammonite answered them, On this condition will I make a covenant with you, that I may thrust out all your right eyes, and lay it for a reproach upon all Israel," &c.—Chap. xi., ver. 1—3.

WE should imagine that now Israel is in the very height of her glory. Her long expressed wish is attained. She has thoroughly abandoned the old theocracy, having exchanged it for a monarchical form of government. Saul, who had been privately anointed king, having passed through a preparatory discipline, has been publicly received as such by his compeers with mingled feelings of joy and envy. There are always some narrow, self-admiring spirits who cannot bear to see their fellows pass them on the pathway of fame. They unselfishly consider themselves the only proper individuals to step into vacant

TO BE CONSIDERED. IN THE SPRING
see the result of this disobedience
Israel, we fear that the invasion
but too prophetic of those awful
declared should come upon their
Being. We take these words
quences of a national rejection of

I. THAT WHEN A NATION REJECTS
RALLY EXPECT TO BE TROUBLED BY
reference to past history, that the
with a very strong and determined
fested at their coming out of Egypt
wants, and in hiring Balaam to
were not allowed to come into the land
unto the tenth generation.† And
inherent dislike in the mind of a
but there would also be in this in-
defeat which the Ammonites had
hand of Jephthah.‡ In fact, the
old land quarrel between these two
sioned the battle just mentioned,
strive to revenge and recover. I
gather that—

a passing insult on the part of Israel, which would have soon spent its violence and then return to calm. It was a deep-seated hatred that time had almost rendered chronic. It is easy to settle the dispute of yesterday, but when years have passed they make the breach almost impassable. Thus God rendered dark the hope of Israel through enemies of the longest standing and the most dreaded.

(1) *Would be bitter enemies.* (2) *Would be despotic enemies.*

2. *They were enemies that had been previously defeated.* As we have seen, they had been most severely routed by Jephthah. The relatives, friends, and companions of these warriors now threatening Israel with invasion were slain in that conflict. Hence they would gather inspiration from that terrible battlefield, from the remembrance of old affections rendered sacred by death in such a cause; and thus animated, how determined would be their courage and how mad their deeds of valour. Truly, Israel had need to fear such a foe.

3. *These enemies were most opportune in their attack upon Israel.* Both as regards the (1) *place* on which it was made, and also as regards the time. It was near to their own country and was also extremely weak, almost incapable of self-defence, as many of its inhabitants had been recently put to the sword because they would not assist the Israelites against the Benjamites,* and thus were very likely to be overcome. (2) *As regards the time of this threatened invasion.* Israel was in a most unsettled condition. The people were in a transition state, just changing an old form of government for a new one, consequently were very much occupied with their own affairs. There were new arrangements to make adapted to the changed condition of things. All the strength, skill, and time that the nation could command was required to be expended upon itself, to give it permanency, and to give freedom from civil faction. Hence, the Israelites were totally unprepared for war, and especially with so powerful a foe. Surely here was a strong intimation that they ought not to have rejected God as they had done during the last few

* Judges xxi.

months. All this was a dark cloud in heavens alone, indicating that their future history would be tempestuous.

II. THAT WHEN A NATION REJECTS GOD ITS DEGRADATION IS CERTAIN TO FOLLOW.

Nahash assumes the weakness of the men of Jabesh-gilead, and their consequent inability to defend themselves from his army. He therefore commences at once to propose the most painful and humiliating condition of continued peace. A condition indeed which would involve the whole nation in disgrace.

1. *These people are about to degrade the noble achievements of their ancestors.* They want to make a covenant with the Ammonites, and thus to cast aside the supremacy which their forefathers had gained over them. And this is a true characteristic of a nation that has rejected God. When they have rejected Him, the next thing to do is to throw away all the sacred memories of the past, and to nullify their meaning. And truly when a nation comes to this, it is degraded to the very lowest abyss.

2. *These people are far more careful about their own comfort than the memories of their past history.* They would a great deal rather undo the achievements of their ancestors than lose their own eyes. Surely that people must have become degraded who regard as more precious the temporary enjoyment of life to the grandeur of their past heroism. When any nation begins to think lightly, and to feel coldly about its noble ancestors and their glorious doings, it is a sure token of decay. Let us ever hold them dear.

3. *These people were willing to degrade themselves by the breaking of a Divine Law.* They wanted to make a covenant with the Ammonites, which had been strictly forbidden by God. This is just what we might have expected. It is only natural that, after they have dethroned the Divine Being, they should infringe His law. A nation's morality will be strong and beautiful in proportion to the respect which is paid by that nation to the supremacy of God. Let a people once dispense with God from its throne, and every other evil will follow with rapid step.

4. *These people are degraded by doubting the bravery of their country.* They desire seven days' respite to send messengers unto all the the coasts of Israel, to see if there is any one to save them from their peril. Why did they doubt the ability of the nation to help in this extremity? Had they not just obtained a new king? Were there not men to be found now as brave as in the days of their ancestors? Low ideas of national courage are deeply characteristic of a people's degradation and ruin. When citizens lose confidence in their defenders it is a sure sign that elements of weakness are mining the society prejudicial to its welfare. May we never lose faith in the heroism of our country!

II. THESE ENEMIES AND THIS DEGRADATION CAME IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE NATION HAD REJECTED GOD IN PROCLAIMING THE NEW KING.

1. *As a reminder.* To make the Israelites very careful in their revolution, and to give them to feel that although they had got a king, he could not remove them from the touch, nor could he shelter them from the displeasure, of God.

2. *As a prognostication.* That notwithstanding their rejoicing at the public recognition of the new king, the future history of the nation could not be altogether smooth and glad. It was the calm before the tempest, and the invasion by the Ammonites was the first peal of thunder announcing the nearing storm.

Lessons :—

(1) *For a nation to reject God is for it truly to forsake its best welfare—political, social, and moral.*

(2) *That a nation rejecting God is sure to meet with numerous difficulties.*

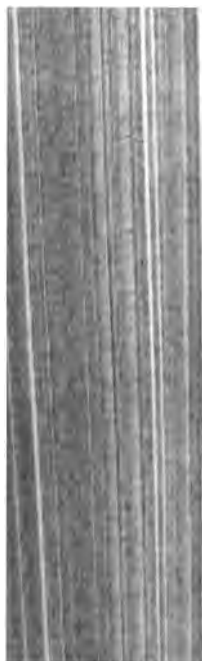
(3) *That a nation by rejecting God introduces into its history the true element of its ruin.*

(4) *This national destruction or sorrow may be delayed, but it is certain.*

Peterborough.

JOSEPH S. EXELL.*

* The subject of the writer's former article, page 156, should have been printed "*Human Effort*," instead of "*Human Help*."



whenever they can be discerned, their experiences understood, they are found multitudes who have adopted more or preters (more or less partial) of the men may have seemed to sit at the foot have directed or have coloured the my indicated in their doctrines and in the and feeling which are more permanent one age could completely discover. To brevity, to review the chief of such haustively, their *biography*, their *character*. And in concluding the series it is purp of them with the "One Man whom in t appointment, and worship without idc

PRINCIPAL BOOKS OF REFERENCE.—
Literature," "The Science of Language
F. D. Maurice's "Religions of the World
other Masters;" Rev. J. W. Gardiner's
penter's "Last Days of Rammohun Roy
to Christ;" Rev. A. W. Williamson's
Bampton Lecture on "Our Lord's Dis
sophy;" S. Clarke's "Ten Great Religi

I

ZOR

(Continued)

CIRCUMSTANCES

ZOROASTER, or, as he
takes his place among
Faiths, as being the

ence a myth, and in the same spirit Sir H. Rawlinson has started an hypothesis which finds in Zoroaster the personification of an old religious system, an imaginary hero, who at first stood as a representative of Scythic Magism. But, accepting the more general conclusion of early, and indeed of most recent historic writers, and the incidental testimony of other authors, we are led to believe that the name Zoroaster, around which clusters the sacred literature known as the Avesta, and that has been a name of power in Persian theology and life for ages, is really the name of a man who actually lived, thought, and wrought as one of the leaders of the religions of the world. A learned Parsee, Mr. Furdonjee, wrote with much ability in 1851 to prove that the age of Zoroaster was the fifth or sixth century before Christ. And, as argued by Mr. S. F. Clarke, Plato's reference to his religion (*Alcibiades* i. 37), speaks of it as something established in the form of Magism, or the system of the Medes in West Iran, while the Avesta appears to have originated in Bactria, or East Iran. This already carries the age of Zoroaster back to at least the sixth or seventh century before Christ. When the Avesta was written Bactria was an independent monarchy. Zoroaster is represented as teaching under King Vistacpa. But the Assyrians conquered Bactria B.C. 1200, which was the last of the Iranic kingdoms, they having previously vanquished the Medes, Hyrcanians, Parthians, and Persians. As Zoroaster must have lived before this conquest, his period is taken back to a still more remote time, about B.C. 1300 or B.C. 1500." Aristotle, however, places him as far back as B.C. 6500, and Bünsen seems to think that not unreasonable. Spiegel considers him a contemporary and, indeed, a neighbour of Abraham, and as living, therefore, about B.C. 2000; Dollinger thinks he may have been somewhat later than Moses, perhaps about B.C. 1300, but he adds, "it is impossible to fix precisely;" and with his verdict and that of Bünsen, who though not refusing Aristotle's opinion, says, "at the present stage of the inquiry the question whether this date (B.C. 6500) is set too high or too low cannot be answered, either in the nega-

tive or the affirmative," it seems almost necessary to agree. Whilst it is clear that he cannot have lived later than the sixth century before Christ, the modern criticism that places him in prehistoric times seems unanswerable. Both a cause and also a result of this chronological difficulty is the theory of there having been more than one Zoroaster; one being Zarathustra, the Perso-Aryan prophet, and the Zoroaster, Zarades, or Zaratus of Greek writers, who was a type and mythical creation. As we have said, we accept the theory of his being an historic personage. But, arising from the difficulty of fixing the date of his life, there are great difficulties in discovering much about its locality or events. We are left chiefly for such information to any inferences we gather from the Avesta, or to any scanty traditions that may seem at all trustworthy. The language of the Zend books is said to be Bactrian, and from this, and other reasons that weigh with them, most modern writers suppose that Zoroaster resided in Bactria. That ancient Asiatic kingdom seems distinguished, from earliest traditions of it, by its fertility of climate, and its warlike populations. In much more recent times its cavalry were famous among the military achievements of the East. Probably in Zoroaster's time there had recently been great physical calamities that affected the former of the two distinctions of Bactria we have mentioned; for it seems that about his era some geological convulsions had changed the climate of Northern Asia, and very suddenly produced severe cold where before there "had been almost a tropical temperature." In the Vendidad, the first part of the Zend Avesta, we read what seems a bitter jeremiad over the intensely rigorous cold of winter, whilst the warmth and glow of departed summer is mournfully bewailed. This convulsion had been much more recent in Asia, according to Lyell, than in most parts of the globe, for the mammoth and the elephant are found there in a frozen condition entombed. The awful convulsion which had so recently turned their summer climate into winter both quickened and illustrated the deep sense Zoroaster had of the antagonism between good and evil in human circumstances.

And perhaps the genius and habits of a warlike population had also their influence in leading him to realise the antagonism between good and evil (the war) in man himself. He was oppressed with the sight of evil—spiritual evil. His meditations led him to the conclusion that woe had its fountain in sin, and the origin of sin was in the demoniac world. Evidently he lived an intensely introspective life. And so, without anticipating what we may have to say on his theology and ethics, we conclude that his life and circumstances were such as gave him a keen sense of strife, of which the warlike spirits and achievements of his countrymen would from his boyhood have been to him a suggestion and a symbol. And, added to this, “amid the terrible convulsions of the air and the ground, these antagonisms of outward good and evil, Zoroaster developed his belief in the dualism of all things.”

Bristol.

URIJAH R. THOMAS.

The Preacher's Scrap Room.

SHORT ESSAYS.

ON CONVERSATION, AS INDICATING PERSONAL CONVICTIONS.

WITHOUT being dishonest, people often assert in conversation, opinions which are not, and should not in fairness, be looked upon as being their genuine beliefs. Mere circumstances frequently decide what views a man shall advance, or oppose, in a colloquial discussion. Let us imagine that he takes the affirmative side. He propounds, say, a certain proposition or enunciates a certain idea. Now, as it is notorious that few persons, in ordinary conversation, think much before they speak, the probability is that the proposition, or the idea, will be unsound. If it is so, however, the man should be censured rather for expressing as his own a sentiment which he has not conceived, than for conceiving a sentiment which is not true. But not only ought we not to account as the settled opinions of even an honest man all the views which he affirms in ordinary conver-

sation. Often, no greater weight should be attached to his utterances when he proceeds to reiterate and confirm them. For, granting that he has assumed a false position, whether he now retires from, or vigorously defends it, will depend mainly upon the person, or persons, in whose society he happens to be placed—upon the mode of attack adopted by his adversary, or adversaries. Of course it will depend partly upon himself. Some people having, however recklessly, once made an assertion, will, on no consideration, withdraw it. They seem to lay a claim to intellectual infallibility, which very claim is an effect and evidence of their being farther removed than ordinarily erring men and women from the possession of that attribute. But the average human being is not so unreasonable. The average human being will plead guilty to an error of the tongue if only it be considerably exposed by another. But he will be driven into an obstinate defence of it by the savage style of criticism—a criticism directed equally to the unsound observation and the unfortunate author of it with which people so often proceed to set right the utterer of a thoughtless, though perhaps innocent remark. Such a style of criticism is almost sure to ruffle the temper of the person against whom it is levelled, and he whose temper has just been wantonly ruffled by another is not in a congenial mood for paying the irritating opponent a compliment on the latter's more accurate knowledge, which an admission of his own mistake would practically amount to. But, further, the man whose temper has been thus ruffled by another is not in a congenial mood for attaining himself this more accurate knowledge. The turbid element of passion, which his adversary has imported into the controversy, has really so blinded the man's mental vision that he does not perceive his mistake as he otherwise would. So I say, a man, without being dishonest, often asserts affirmatively in ordinary conversation, opinions which are not his genuine beliefs, and is influenced in retiring from, or vigorously defending, his false position mainly by the person or persons in whose society he happens to be placed. Let us now imagine that the man takes the negative side in a colloquial discussion. In this case the views which he expresses are even less to be relied on as his own than in the previous instance which has been assumed. Often, even an honest man denies simply because another person has affirmed. He was himself, perhaps, on the very point of giving utterance to a particular idea, when some one else happening to express the idea before him, he at once proceeds to cavil at it. But it does

not at all follow that the man's conduct on such an occasion is the result of mere captiousness, or a love of opposition simply, which unworthy motive does, it must be admitted, not unfrequently prompt the antagonistic attitude assumed in debate. It commonly springs from a certain love of fairness which, when any single aspect of a subject has been forcibly presented, induces one, in a spirit of justice, to urge some other. The criticism proceeds, too, in many instances from the fact that, when a sentiment assumes palpable shape by being embodied in words, you can see in it a semblance of defect which you could not see were the thing merely in your mind. Authors in particular know this to be the case. They will testify that after expressing their ideas in composition they detect the fallacies underlying them as they never did before, and thus, that by writing they not only impart their thoughts but mature them. Bacon implies this theory when he says, "The proceeding upon somewhat conceived, in writing, doth for the most part facilitate despatch; for, though it should it be wholly rejected, yet that negative is more pregnant of direction than an indefinite, as ashes are more generative than dust." Allusion has been made to the semblance of defect perceived in a spoken sentiment. One can scarcely, indeed, utter an observation that may not be questioned, with considerable show of reason. I have even read of some persons who proceeded seriously to dispute the truth of the commonplace axiom, "Man is a rational creature." The objector urged in support of his argument, the case of the thousands of unhappy men and women who people our lunatic asylums.

The moral of what has been written is: Let us be cautious in inferring a man's settled creed, and in particular, let us be cautious in deducing views of his character from a few isolated expressions of opinion uttered by him in the freedom of social intercourse. Many of the most right-thinking and right-acting men whose sentiments and whose lives have ever blessed humanity might, by such a process, be made to appear altogether wrong.

THE ALLEGED TYRANNY OF SELF-MADE MEN.

It is commonly said that men who have risen from a humble position make the hardest masters. The accusation is, probably, true. But, before judgment is pronounced upon such persons, two circumstances ought, I think, to be considered in extenuation of their conduct. The first circum-

stance is this: there is generally, on the part of those who have to serve under a man whose social status was once, they know, far inferior to what it is now, a disposition to presume upon that fact—a disposition to pay less deference to the commands of such an one than they would pay to the commands of a master whose social status they do not know to have been formerly thus inferior. The unfortunate man, therefore, is obliged in self-defence to practise a stricter discipline—to maintain a less affable bearing in his intercourse with those under him than he otherwise would. The second circumstance is this: whether he practises this stricter discipline—maintains his less affable bearing—or not, he will appear to those who are acquainted with his antecedent history, to be more arbitrary in his position than he really is, by contrast with the position which he once occupied.

THORNTON WELLS.

The Preacher's Finger-Post.

**Subject: THE JEWISH JUBILEE,
AN EMBLEM OF THE GOSPEL
AGE.**

"Then shalt thou cause the trumpet of the jubilee to sound . . . throughout all your land."—Lev. xxv. 9.

"The acceptable year of the Lord."—Luke iv. 19.

In the first volume of the *HOMILIST* (page 76) we indicated that the Jewish Jubilee taught two great principles. First: That the *degenerative* forces of society are in itself; and, secondly: That the *corrective* forces of society are from God. We may find analogies between the Jewish Jubilee and the Gospel age (1) in the manner in which it

was introduced—on the "day of atonement," (2) in the universality of its extent—"throughout all the land" for every Jew, and (3) in the benefits which it conferred. This last is the only point of analogy we shall notice in this sketch. The blessings may be comprised under four heads.

I. THE CANCELLING OF DEBT.

"At the end of every seven years thou shalt make a release," &c. (Deuteronomy xv. 1—6.) Now, spiritually, in relation to God we are all debtors, "debtors to do the whole law." There are many points, of course, in which sin must not be considered a debt. A debt may be justifi-

able, sin is not; the discharge of a debt sets a debtor free from all obligation to the creditor; the pardon of sin does not: the contracting of a debt implies the free consent of the creditor, but the commission of sin does not imply the consent of God. Sin is like a debt only in one sense—viz., an *unfulfilled obligation*, and this unfulfilled obligation, which in relation to God is enormous, may be removed in all cases in the Gospel age. "Be it known unto you, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins."

II. The **TERMINATION OF VASSALAGE**. The Jews, as well as other Oriental people, were in the habit of paying their debts by selling themselves to their creditors, and thus they became the property of others, they had no claim upon their own time or powers, they were slaves. On this day of jubilee a man was made free and became his own again. The moment the blast of the jubilee trumpet fell on his ears he would be free (read Lev. xxv. 39). Spiritually, all unregenerate men are slaves; sin is a slavery of the worst kind, it is a *soul* slavery, "carnally sold under sin." A man's body may be in chains, and yet he himself be free; no massive walls or adamant chains can con-

fine the soul. But in the Gospel age spiritual liberty is proclaimed; it is the "glorious liberty of the children of God."

III. The **RESTORATION OF PROPERTY**. All the property that the various citizens of Judea had lost during the fifty years would now come back to its original possessors. "If thy brother be waxen poor," &c., &c. (read Lev. xxv. 25, 26). As sinners what property have we lost, what property have we sacrificed? We have lost spiritual intelligence, moral freedom, peace of conscience, friendship with the Infinite Father. In the Gospel age all this is brought back to us. We become "heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ," heirs to an "inheritance incorruptible, undefiled," &c., &c. "All things are ours," &c., &c.

IV. The **ENJOYMENT OF REST**. "A jubilee shall that fiftieth year be unto you: ye shall not sow, neither reap that which groweth of itself in it, nor gather the grapes in it of thy vine undressed" (ver. 11). And then "Ye shall not therefore oppress one another, but thou shalt fear thy God" (ver. 17). Relaxation from toil, physical repose, social harmony. Unregenerate men have no rest; "There is no rest, saith my God, to the wicked." All is agitation, turmoil, tumult;

men battling with themselves, with society, with nature. Under the Gospel age peace is proclaimed, all may have "the peace of God, which passeth all understanding." He that believeth in the Christ of God "enters into rest," into a true jubilee of soul. But when all shall come under the influence of the Gospel there will be universal peace, "the wolf shall dwell with the lamb," &c.

CONCLUSION. Thank God for this moral jubilee! Would that all men would accept its blessings. Was there a Jew, think you, who started not at the trumpet blast, and who did not readily and gratefully accept the blessings it announced? But in this moral jubilee men, alas, close their ears, and spurn the high blessings of the Gospel era.

Subject: GOD'S POWER REVEALED IN HIS FORBEARANCE TO SINNERS.

"He is slow to anger and great in power."—Nah. i. 3.

This is a remarkable expression. It seems as if the prophet meant God is slow to anger *because He is great in power*; if He had less power He would be less patient. A man may "be slow to anger," slow to deal out vengeance because he lacks power to do so. But God is slow to anger because He has abundance of power. In order to see the

power revealed in His forbearance towards sinners in this world think of four things:—

I. HIS EXQUISITE SENSIBILITY. There are some men slow to anger because they have not the susceptibility of feeling an insult or offence; their patience, such as it is, is nothing but a natural stoicism. Many men are lauded for their calmness under insults, who are rather to be pitied for their natural insensibility, or denounced for their moral callousness. But the Great God is ineffably sensitive. He is sensibility itself, He is love, He is emotion. He feels everything. Every moral act vibrates on His heart chord, and yet He is slow to anger. Think on—

II. HIS ABHORRENCE OF SIN. It is the "abominable" thing which He emphatically hates. His whole nature revolts from it. He feels that it is in antagonism to His will and to the order and well-being of His universe. Think on—

III. HIS PROVOCATION BY THE WORLD. Multiply the sins of each man in one day by the countless millions of men that populate the globe, then you will have some conception of the provocation that this God of exquisite sensibility, of an ineffable hatred to sin, receives every day from this globe. One

insult often sets our blood ablaze. Surely if all the patience of all the angels in heaven were to be embodied in one personality, and that personality were entrusted with the government of this world for one day, before the clock struck the hour of midnight he would set the world on fire. Think on—

IV. HIS RIGHT TO DO WHATEVER HE PLEASES. He could show His anger, if He pleased, anywhen, anywhere, or anyhow. He is absolutely irresponsible; He has no one to fear. When men feel anger there are many reasons to prevent them from showing it, but He has no such reason. How great, then, must be His power in holding back His anger. His power of self-control is infinite. "He is slow to anger and of great power."

Subject: MAN AN OBJECT OF ANGELIC OBSERVATION.


"A spectacle unto . . . angels."—1 Cor. iv. 9.

The margin reads "theatre" for "spectacle," from the Greek word *θεατρον*. The reference, in all probability, is to the ancient amphitheatre, whose arena was surrounded by circular seats, capable of accommodating thousands of spectators. In this arena trained athletes struggled for prizes in the ancient Games: on such an arena Paul speaks of himself

and fellow-labourers as struggling, the objects not only of human but of angelic spectators. The world is indeed a moral theatre, every man an actor, and disembodied spirits look on as spectators. "We are encompassed about," &c. Angels as spectators are *intelligent, interested, numerous, constant*. If the eye of such intelligences are constantly upon us, what are the practical conclusions?

I. THAT OUR CONDUCT HERE CONCERNS THE UNIVERSE. No man lives unto himself; each unit is a link in being's endless chain. His actions must tell banefully or beneficently on the creation; hence all loving and loyal intelligences direct their attention to him with deep and unabating interest. Besides, men and angels are offsprings of the same Father, participators of the same nature, subjects of the same moral government. No wonder they are so concerned.

II. THAT OUR PART SHOULD BE CAREFULLY PLAYED. How doubly careful are our actors on the stage, in the presence of spectators distinguished for the highest genius, erudition, and artistic culture. It behoves every man to be cautious how he acts in the presence of his fellow-creatures, whether they are children or adults, plebeians or princes; but how much more cautious should he be



futile. Whilst there is
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IV. THAT WE MAY EX
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without a cloud."

CHARACTER.—"Every act

Seeds of Sermons from the Minor Prophets.

If the Bible as a whole is inspired, it is of vast importance that all its Divine ideas should be brought to bear upon the living world of men. Though the pulpit is the organ Divinely intended for this work, it has been doing it hitherto in a miserably partial and restricted method. It selects isolated passages, and leaves whole chapters and books for the most part untouched. Its conduct to the Minor Prophets may be taken as a case in point. How seldom are they resorted to for texts, and yet they abound with splendid passages throbbing with Divine ideas. It is our purpose to go through this section of the Holy Word: selecting, however, only such verses in each chapter and book as seem the most suggestive of truths, of the most vital interest, and universal application.

We begin with HOSEA. The remembrance of some facts connected with this man will greatly help us in our endeavours to reach the meaning and feel the power of certain of his utterances. He was a native of Israel, and lived in Samaria about 700 or 800 years B.C. His prophecy seems to have embraced a period of about 60 years, from Jeroboam's death to Hezekiah's ascension to the throne. He was contemporary with Isaiah, and preceded Joel, Jonah, and Amos. His prophecies are directed almost exclusively to the ten tribes who had sunk into the deepest idolatry. His style, as a writer, is very peculiar. "It is," says De Witte, "abrupt, unrounded, and ebullient, his rhythm hard, leaping, and violent." Like a bee he has been said to fly from one flower to another, to suck the honey from all the blossoms.

HOSEA.

No. XXXI.

Subject: SOCIAL SINS AND THEIR RESULT.

"They have spoken words, swearing falsely in making a covenant: thus judgment springeth up as hemlock in the furrows of the field."
—Hosea x. 4.

I. SOCIAL SINS. There are three sins referred to in this verse. First: *Vain speech*. "They have spoken words." This means, according to Henderson, Elzas, and others, "They utter empty speeches." Not only are words of falsehood, blasphemy, and unchastity sinful, but empty words. For every "idle word" we shall have to give an account. How much idle language is there current in society! The chat of

gossip, the formalities of etiquette, the rapid compliments of society; as well as those airy words of wit and humour which sometimes delude, sometimes pain, and sometimes please. Secondly: *False swearing*. False speech is bad enough, for it misrepresents facts, and often does serious mischief; but when backed by an oath its heinousness is intensified and blackened. How much false swearing there is in society! Not merely in judicial courts, but in homes, in shops, in fields, in general society. Thirdly: *Unrighteous treaties*. "Making a covenant." The word *bad* is implied here, for there is no harm in making covenants. Making a bad covenant. The primal reference perhaps is to certain treaties

Israel had formed with foreign nations. How much wicked contracting there is going on in society every day in commerce, in politics, as well as in private life. Untruthful as well as unrighteous bargains are being struck every hour in all circles. In truth, the sins here charged to Israel are not uncommon in England this day — empty speech, false swearing, and making unrighteous treaties.

II. RESULTS of social sins. "Thus judgment springeth up as hemlock in the furrows of the field." It matters not to the sense of the passage whether you read "poppy" for "hemlock," or "ridges" for "furrows," the idea is the same—viz., that out of these social sins certain results appear. How do they come? First: They come as a *growth*. They "spring up" or blossom. Sins bring with them their own punishment, no positive infliction is required; every sin is a seed from which a pestiferous plant must spring. Secondly: They come as a *poison*—"Hemlock." Some read "poppy," and some "darnel," but all agree in the poisonousness of the production. In any case it is a "hemlock," a small decoction of which destroyed a Socrates. "Sin when it is finished bringeth forth death." Thirdly: They come in *abundance*. "That springeth up as hemlock in the furrows of the field." Very prolific is sin. See its plants growing in the ridges and furrows of life: in sick chambers, in hospitals, in work-houses, in prisons, in battle-fields also! How thickly the hemlock grows!

No. XXXII.

Subject: THE DIVINE VOICE TO A WORTHLESS PEOPLE.

"Sow to yourselves in righteousness, reap in mercy; break up your fallow ground: for it is time to seek the Lord, till he come and rain righteousness upon you."—Hosea x. 12.

"Sow to yourselves for righteousness, reap according to love, plough for yourselves virgin soil; for it is time to seek Jehovah, till He come and reign righteousness upon you" (*Delitzsch*). Sowing and reaping are figures here used to denote the spiritual and moral conduct of this people. Indeed, all human life consists of sowing and reaping. We reap to-day what we sowed yesterday, and we sow to-day what we shall reap to-morrow, and so on through all future. Every intelligent act embodies a moral principle, contains a seed that must germinate, and grow. We have here several things worthy of study.

I. A WRETCHED MORAL STATE. "Fallow ground," uncultivated earth. A state of—First: *Unloveliness*. It is either an expanse of grey earth or of weeds, thistles, and thorns. Secondly: *Unfruitfulness*. Unless the earth is cultivated there is no fruit, and the land is worthless. Thirdly: *Wastefulness*. On the fallow ground fall the rain, the dew, the sunshine, and the frost, but all in vain. How much Divine grace is wasted on unregenerate men: sermons, books, Bibles, providences, means of grace all wasted. Another subject presented here is—

II. AN URGENT MORAL DUTY.

First: *Moral ploughing*. "Break up your fallow ground." Drive the plough shear through it. How can you break up the soil of the heart? Not by mere volition, but by thinking on the subjects suited to excite. Think especially on two things. (1) What God has been to us. (2) What we have been to Him. Secondly: *Moral sowing*. "Sow in righteousness." Go in for righteousness. Work to put yourself and fellow-men right with themselves, God, and others, implant everywhere righteous ideas and actions. Thirdly: *Moral reaping*. "Reap in mercy." Accept what comes to you in sentiments of love, and mercy. Another subject is—

III. A SOLEMN MORAL SUGGESTION. "It is time." First: No time to lose. Secondly: Much has been lost. Thirdly: It is only now the work can be effectively done.

IV. A GLORIOUS MORAL PROSPECT. He will "rain righteousness," or, as some render it, "teach you righteousness." Pursue this work of moral agriculture properly, and God Himself will come and teach you righteousness.

No. XXXIII.

Subject: A TYPICAL PORTRAIT OF A PEOPLE.

"When Israel was a child, then I loved him, and called my son out of Egypt. As they called them, so they went from them: they sacrificed unto Baalim, and burned incense to graven images. I taught Ephraim also to go, taking them by their arms; but they knew not that I healed them. I drew them

with cords of a man, with bands of love; and I was to them as they that take off the yoke on their jaws, and I laid meat unto them. He shall not return into the land of Egypt, but the Assyrian shall be his king, because they refused to return. And the sword shall abide on his cities, and shall consume his branches, and devour them, because of their own counsels. And my people are bent to backsliding from me: though they called them to the Most High, none at all would exalt him."—Hosea xi. 1—7.

In these verses we have three things worthy of note:

I. A HIGHLY FAVOURED people. What is said here concerning the people of Israel? First: God loved them. "When Israel was a child, then I loved him." "Thus saith the Lord, Israel is my son, even my first-born" (Exodus iv. 22). The early period of the existence of the Hebrew people is frequently represented as their youth (Isa. liv. 15; Jerem. ii. 2). Why the Almighty should have manifested a special interest in the descendants of Abraham is a question which the Infinite only can answer. We know, however, that He loves all men. "God so loved the world that He gave," &c., &c. Secondly: God emancipated them. "And called my son out of Egypt." He broke the rod of their oppressor. He delivered them from Egyptian thralldom. This material emancipation of the Jews is a striking emblem of the great moral emancipation. Thirdly: God educated them. "I taught Ephraim also to go." Some read this line, "I have given Ephraim a leader"—referring

to Moses. Moses was only the instrument. "I taught Ephraim also to go"—as a child in leading strings is taught. When they were in the wilderness God led them by a pillar of cloud. Fourthly: God *healed* them. "I healed them." "I am the Lord that healed thee" (Exod. xv. 25). Fifthly, God *guided* them. "I drew them with cords of a man, with bands of love." With human cords I drew them with bands of love. He did not draw them by might: He attracted them by mercy. Sixthly: God *relieved* them. "I was to them as they that take off the yoke on their jaws." As the kind farmer raises from the neck and cheek of the ox the heavy yoke so as to leave him freedom to eat his food, so I raised from your neck the yoke of Egyptian bondage. Seventhly: God *fed* them. "I laid meat unto them." He rained manna about their camp. He gave them bread from heaven, and water from the rock. What a kind God He was to these people! And has He not been even more kind to us, the favoured men of this land and age? Here we have—

II. A SIGNALLY UNGRATEFUL PEOPLE. First: They *disobeyed God's teaching*. "As they called them so they went from them." "They"—the lawgivers, judges, priests, prophets, whom He employed. "They went from them." That is, the people went from their divine teachers—went from them in heart. Secondly: They *gave themselves to idolatry*. "They sacrificed unto Baalim, and burned incense to graven images."

Idolatry was their besetting sin. It marked their history more or less from the beginning to the end. What is idolatry but giving that love to inferior objects that is due to God and God alone? Thirdly: They *ignored God's kindness*. "They knew not that I healed them." They ascribed their restoration either to themselves or others, not to God. Fourthly: They *persistently backslided*. "And my people are bent to backsliding from me." They forsake me and are bent on doing so. Such is the *signally ungrateful* conduct of this people. Here we have—

III. A RIGHTEOUSLY PUNISHED people. "He shall not return into the land of Egypt, but the Assyrian shall be his king because they refused to return. And the sword shall abide on his cities, and shall consume his branches, and devour them, because of their own counsels." Whilst they would not be driven back to Egypt again, judgment should overtake them even in the promised land, and the judgment would be—(1) *Extensive*. "On the cities," and on the "branches." The large town and the little hamlets. The judgment should (2) *Continue*. "Abide on the cities." The judgment should be (3) *Destructive*. "Consume his branches."

CONCLUSION. Is not the history of this people *typical*? Do not they represent especially the peoples of modern Christendom, highly favoured of God, signally ungrateful to God, and exposed to punishment from God?

The Pulpit and its Handmaids.

ORIGINAL SIMILITUDES.

"RELIGION is not mere truth, gained by study, and retained by watchfulness in the soul. It is truth translated into actions, embodied in life."

"IGNORANCE is weakness. An ignorant soul lacks force in its faculties, and skill in their use."

IGNORANCE.—"One mortal, one nation, or generation of mortals, may flare a flambeau, and another twinkle a taper; still the sphere of human enlightenment is at best a point, compared with the boundless universe of night surrounding it. Science is a drop; nescience is the ocean in which that drop is whelmed."

WORDS.—"God alone knows the influence of words upon human souls. Every word is a seed, that will produce either night-shade or corn."

"THE weakest effort, if honest, is as divine as the achievement of a seraph. The iris in the dewdrop is just as true and perfect an iris as the bow that measures the heavens."

"TRUE THEOLOGY is bread; but undigested bread does not impart health, but impairs it; does not invigorate the man, but enfeebles him. A great theologian is often a moral invalid."

TRIALS.—"The bitterest cup has curative virtues; the fiercest storm breathes to purify."

"LOVE is the healer of discords. No hand but hers can retune the discordant harp of church life."

"ANGER in itself is as holy a passion as love. Indeed, in its legitimate form, it is but a development of love. Love indignant with that which is opposed to the cause of right and happiness."

DEPENDENCE.—"Like ivy, every human soul is clinging to something for life and support."

THE WEAKER THE SOUL THE MORE NOISE.—"It is the little fussy, shallow brook that rattles. The deep river rolls on in silence."

"As brooks in nature swell into rivers by the confluence of contributory streams, so the divine truth widens and deepens by every contribution of holy thought. And never was it so deep and broad as now. May it speed on, and soon cover the earth as the waters cover the channels of the deep."

INTERDEPENDENCE.—"As in the material world one thing is everywhere dependent upon another—atom on atom, globe on globe, system on system, and interdependence, like a golden girdle, binds all together; so, in the human world, no man can live an insulated unit. Each is an essential part of the whole."

"PRAYER changes the night of the soul into morning, the discords of the soul into music, its dark and chilly November into May, all sunshine and blossom."

"PRAISE is not the 'service of song,' as it is called, it is the spirit of life. It is not until all the activities of our being chime in one triumphant and unbroken psalm that our destiny is realised."

"THEOLOGY at best is a human fabrication; its propositions are but human conceptions of divine things, they are not the things themselves."

"SONG is the language of happiness, and he who has the true sentiments of worship, gratitude, and adoration, will ever be happy. True worship is happiness. There is no happiness in God's moral creation without it."

THE CONSTRUCTIVE INSTINCT.
—"Man is a constructive creature. Some are building scientific systems, some mercantile schemes, some social institutions. All are building their own character."

"STRIFE is an evil of terrific progress. At first it is like the dropping of water oozing through a mound that encloses a sea. Every drop widens the channel until the drops become a stream, and the stream a torrent."

FRIENDSHIP.—"False friends are like chaff, they fly away before the first blast of adversity; the true are the precious grain that lie at our feet."

"GRATITUDE is joy; it is divine goodness acting on the soul, like the sunbeam of spring

on the songsters of the grove, setting all to music. It is the transporting spirit in the palace of angels and of saints."

PREACHERS. — "Why are preachers so often weak, trimming, and despicable? Because they stand not in the counsels of the Lord, but in the opinions of others, and in their own conceits. They reflect the rush-light of human learning, not the sunbeams of divine thought."

"MISERY is an exception, not a law in the universe. It is begotten of the creature, not produced by the Creator."

THE MISCHIEF MAKER.—
"Years entomb old quarrels: this is a merciful arrangement. The mischievous man is an explorer of those tombs. He opens the graves of old disputes, brings their ghastly skeletons up, and endeavours to put new life in them. He is a fiend that lives among the tombs."

THE BODY.—"The body of an aged saint is to him what that chrysalis is to the insect, whose wings are perfect enough to enable it to break forth into life, sip the nectar of the flowers, sweep the fields of beauty, and bask in the sunshine of day."

WARS.—"Physical wars of all descriptions, defensive as well as aggressive, are, to say the least, undertakings of questionable morality. I believe they are wrong, essentially and eternally wrong. But to conquer self is a righteous campaign. Man has a right to dethrone evil passions, to crucify old lusts, to pull down corrupt prejudices;

his spirit is his own domain. It is the Canaan God has given him to conquer and possess."

WORSHIP.—"The highest aim of the creature is to worship with the fullest loyalty and love the Creator. The guilt and misery of the world is that it fails in this. The ultimate aim of Christianity is to tune the world's heart to music, and cause loud hallelujahs to break from every lip."

"**DIVINE** providence is a machine. The most insignificant circumstance is an essential pin, screw, or wheel in its works."

"**MAN**, however poor, has the stamp of God's image on him, and to despise that image is a contempt for the Divine Majesty."

"**LOATHING** the wrong ever springs from loving the right."

"**A GOOD** heart is the soul of all true royalty."

PURSUIT OF WEALTH.—"Often in the pursuit of riches

we see souls that might have expanded into seraphs running into grubs."

"**METHOD** is of primary moment in the business of intellect. Great intellects become bankrupt for the want of this. What is might without method!"

"**LOVE** is genius, and love is light; it is the best lamp in life's journey. In no light can the intellect see things so clearly and so truthfully."

THE HEART.—"The moral heart of man is the best teacher. It is the table on which is engraved the laws of God, the eternal principles of virtue; it is man's book of life on which experience has written its lessons. It is the mirror that reflects the infinite."

ELOQUENCE.—"True eloquence does more than awaken mere emotion in the hearer. It instructs. Its spirit is in such vital alliance with eternal reality that its very sounds echo such truths as start the highest strains of thought."

Homiletical Breviaries.

No. LXXXIV.

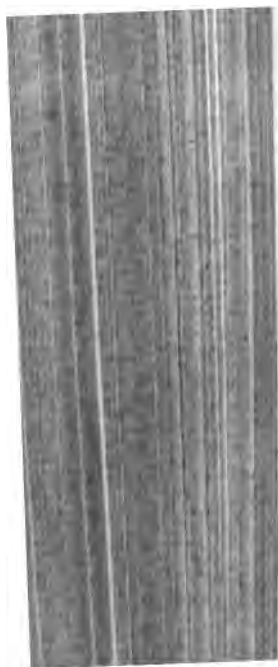
Subject: THE THREE TEMPLES OF THE ONE GOD.

"The temple at Jerusalem."—Psalm lxxviii. 29.

"The temple of His body."—John iii. 21.

"Ye are the temple of the living God."—2 Cor. vi. 16.

I. THE ONE PURPOSE of the three Temples. The essential idea of a temple is that of a place where God manifests Himself to man,



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Bristol.

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Subject: GEN

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This subject is connected
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resisting every temptation to the contrary, with the words "Shall I offer," &c. Second: *Work*—not to *schemes* only that are pleasant, and in *times* that are convenient, and by *proxies* that are easily obtainable, will the true worker for God devote himself. Third: *Gifts*. Not with careless gifts, almost covertly given, or the smallest coin doled out niggardly, can he give who says, "Shall I offer," &c. Fourth: *Personal religion*. There is meanness and ingratitude in the spirit that relegates all religious care to the leisure of Sunday, or of the sick-room, or the infirmities of old age. Why should we not offer to God that which costs nothing? Three questions may throw light upon it. I. How far what costs you nothing is any benefit to yourself? Such may be of some benefit. But only what "costs something" calls out (1) highest motives, and employs (2) all faculties. II. How far what costs you nothing has much influence upon the world? Sacrifice is the subtle and tremendous element needful in all great influence. In the home, in the Church, in the state, they only climb true thrones, and wear real crowns, who have the spirit of sacrifice. The Saviour himself relied on that—"I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me." So does the Eternal Father of men, for He has made "Christ," who is incarnate Sacrifice, "the power of God." III. How far what costs you nothing is acceptable to God? Christ's praise of the poor widow's gift, God's acceptance of the sacrifice of Christ, sufficiently indicate the divine estimate of self-denial. And since that service which costs us something has the pulses of reality, the glow of love, and the reflection of Christ, it surely is acceptable to God.

Bristol.

U. R. THOMAS.

NO. LXXXVI.

Subject: THE PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE IN CHRISTLY EXPERIENCE.

"This one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."—Phil. iii. 13, 14.

We note here the forgetfulness, the hope, the life-effort of the Christly man. I. THE FORGETFULNESS. It is not a forgetfulness of sin and sorrow, but of virtue and achievements that is here

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numerous, and in some cases very urgent. For the information of readers who are not acquainted with it, we give the following extract from the pen of Rev. William Webster, M.A., Fellow of Queen's College, Cambridge, the eminent author of the "Syntax and Synonyms of the Greek Testament," and joint editor of the Greek Testament, which by common consent is equal, if not superior to that of Dean Alford :—

"These discourses remind me of the saying of our Lord, 'The kingdom of heaven is like unto a householder who brings out of his storehouse things new and old !' While these pages contain that which is old, they present also that which is new ; they show that the Bible is no less a living book in our own time than it was in the age in which it was written, that it meets the ever varying wants and changing aspects of the Church in the present, as well as in any preceding century. Few can read this volume without discovering the justice of the remark made by a Pilgrim Father, 'God has yet more light to break forth from His Holy Word.' The well is deep, there is still a rich mine of pure gold in the inexhaustible treasures of Holy Writ. I cannot better express my own opinion of the work than by adopting the language in which Archdeacon Hare has described the expositions of Luther : 'His strong good sense, and his familiarity with the Bible, often enabled him to discern the truth by a kind of divination even in difficult critical questions.' . . . The pulpit will never lose its power while sermons are delivered which for freshness and terseness, for originality of thought, vigour of style, and Catholicity of sentiment, culminating in heart-stirring application to man's minds and bosoms, can be compared with those in the present volume. Such qualities, which are valuable at all times, shine with greater lustre when they are sustained throughout one hundred and twenty homilies on a distinct portion of Scripture, as this expository mode tends much more to the edification of the hearer than to popularity of the preacher. The superiority of this volume, and its adaptation to the present age, will at once appear, if it is compared with works somewhat similar, such as Chrysostom's Homilies, Simeon's or Dr. Lange's Homiletical Commentary. They furnish an example of the way in which those who watch for souls may engraft fresh slips from the tree of knowledge. There is a reality in this volume. We may say of the author, *nil falsi audet, nil veri non audet dicere*. On every topic he says neither more nor less than he feels. There is also a high-souled indifference to human censure or human applause in the book. I shall heartily rejoice if this volume finds its way into the hands of those who usually restrict their reading to writers of their own branch of the Church Universal, believing that its perusal will assist the growth of truth and peace. I can heartily recommend it to all my clerical brethren who would adapt their preaching to meet the errors of the present day ; to all, whether ministers or laymen, who wish to add to their store of knowledge. May they go forward in their toil, giving similar proof with the author that they are workmen who need not be ashamed ; speaking out with

all boldness, under the guidance of the Spirit of Power and of Love, and of a sound mind."

Professor C. Finney, of Oberlin, United States, says "this is a book of *unspeakable* value."

THE INTERPRETER; OR, SCRIPTURE FOR FAMILY WORSHIP. Arranged and Annotated by C. H. SPURGEON. In Eight Parts. London: Passmore and Alabaster, 4, Paternoster Buildings.

MR. SPURGEON is an indefatigable worker, and he always works not only with great ability and zeal, but with a remarkable skill. Of course we do not endorse all his theological utterances; nor in every case can we extol his method of treating the Sacred Text. What of that? No doubt he has a stronger opposition to our opinions and methods than we have to his. Every man in his own order; and no man perfect. Mr. Spurgeon is doing a great work, and God be with him! This "Interpreter" is not what one might have expected from its name, something critical and exegetic, but it is what the author intended it to be, selected passages from the Word of God for every morning and evening throughout the year, with running comments and suitable hymns, and is adapted for great usefulness. Some of the author's remarks are very fresh and racy, and the spirit is always reverent and devout.

THE HUMAN INTELLECT: WITH AN INTRODUCTION UPON PSYCHOLOGY AND THE SOUL. By NOAH PORTER, D.D., LL.D., President of Yale College. Strahan and Co., publishers.

WE called the attention of our readers to this book when it first appeared: we are again called upon to notice it, and we do so with readiness and hearty approval. We have no work so thoroughly comprehensive on the subject of which it treats, and no work where the subject is handled with greater ability or in a more scientific spirit. The author has prepared it as a text-book for colleges, high schools, and students of psychological and speculative philosophy. The philosophy taught in this volume is pronounced and positive in the theistic and spiritual direction, as contrasted with the materialistic and antitheistic tendency, which is so defended by its advocates as alone worthy to be called scientific. No psychological student should be without this most invaluable work.



The Three Temples of the One God.

[This discourse was delivered on the occasion of the dedication of the site of a new church in Clapham Road for Dr. Thomas, over which Sir Sydney Waterlow, Bart., Lord Mayor of London, presided, Oct. 12.]

“Thy Temple at Jerusalem.”—Psalm lxxviii. 29.

“The Temple of His body.”—John ii. 21.

“Ye are the Temple of the living God.”—2 Cor. vi. 16.

THE theory that some have maintained, that these three temples of the one God are related to each other in a lineal descent, and to the Triune God in His Three Manifestations, does not seem to me to be scriptural. For the first temple stood, and plainly answered some of its purposes, while both the second and third were in existence; indeed, the third existed before the first, for there were godly men before there was any sacred edifice, and before the Incarnation of the Son of God. So it is simply impossible to assign to these three temples any rigidly fixed era in their relation to each other. And as to their separate functions with regard to the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, is it not wiser to say they were all related to All; that the temple at Jerusalem, if it contained a symbol of the Father's presence, also contained types of the Son, and was itself a prediction of

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As the scene of God's revelation of Himself to man the temple at Jerusalem was ever pre-eminently distinguished. It has been truly said that all its many courts led into, and all its gorgeous ceremonial seemed to revolve in idea around, the Holy of Holies, which was the presence-chamber of Jehovah. And most clearly He whose very name was Emanuel, God with us, was not only revealing to us, in His Incarnation the humanity of God, but the Godhead Himself. The Divine *Majesty* that radiated from Christ on to the soldiers who surrounded Him in the garden, and made them fall backwards to the ground ; the Divine *Power* that worked His miracles ; the Divine *Wisdom* that saw into the hearts of ambitious disciples, of the women at the well, and of His designing foes ; the Divine *Purity* that distinguished His unspotted and perfect life ; the Divine *Love* that took children in His arms, and led the blind, and touched the leprous and the dead, and wept with mourners, and pardoned penitents, and filled the death hours with thoughts of others, even as it had consumed His life with work for them,—in all this, majesty, power, wisdom, purity, love, we see at the second temple the brightness of God's glory, the "express image of His Person." And as certainly all Christly men and women reveal the Divine Father and the loving Son to the world. The sinner, the sad, the sceptic, will see God in us, if we have any godliness (which means godlikeness) at all.

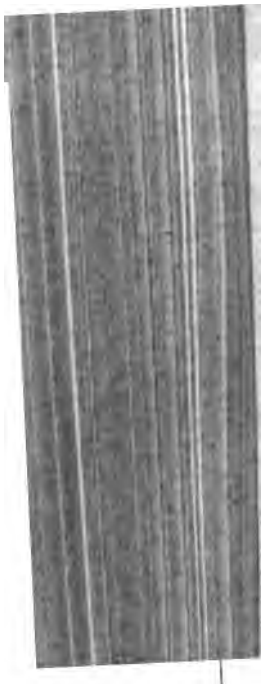
As the scene of man's consecration of himself to God the temple at Jerusalem was distinguished. Its many altars, and most of all its altar of "burnt-offering," meant self-surrender to Jehovah. And as surely the whole breath of Christ's life, every pulse of His wondrous Being, told of sacrifice to God—sacrifice for us men and for our salvation. All other altar fires grow pale in the light of that sacrifice. His whole life and death said, "Not as I will, but as Thou wilt." Nor is it less true that all Christly

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 the stars His birth was

and the living influence of quiet lives, that distil as dew in all holy homes, and the work of the viewless and silent Spirit of God, are men and children being converted, and so "the kingdom of God cometh not with observation." The three temples have a similarity (2) In their *materials*. The glory of the temple at Jerusalem was not in its size, many edifices of Greece and Rome and Nineveh transcended it there. But in its choice and costly materials it was peerless. The gold, the precious stones, the fragrant woods, warranted the Jews in calling it "our beautiful house." And Scripture tells us that the Saviour said concerning Himself, "a body hast Thou prepared Me." What a body His was art fails to convey. It incarnated God. Then the third temple, composed of individuals each of whom is "fearfully and wonderfully made," and comprising the best souls of all lands and ages, has a variety, a massiveness, a glory, so that beyond any mere structure it comes to be mentally and spiritually a habitation for "the Father of Spirits." Another point of resemblance is (3) *In their each being an object of enmity*. The first was not preserved, as we might have supposed, with all the delicacy of sanctity from the rude touch of any hostile hand. It was often a fortress, assailed, besieged, destroyed. Nebuchadnezzar and the Syrians, and seven hundred years after the Roman legions, thundered with engines of war at the walls, and razed to the ground successive structures of the temple. The Saviour suffered being tempted, and His body as roughly and rudely treated as the temple had been. For He was spat upon, scourged, crowned with thorns, crucified. And of the third temple what shall we say, but that the disciple is not above his Master? The Christly have been "persecuted, afflicted, tormented." Scorn, cavil, persecution, pride, are the weapons of the world-spirit against every true man. Hence there is "persecution for righteousness' sake." Another analogy is



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There are lessons here

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warn you, the spirit of the second permeate you. He, the Christ, must clear the courts of all idolatry and greed, and of gain.

Bristol.

URLAH R. THOMAS.

Homiletic Sketches on the Book of Psalms.

Our Purpose.—Many learned and devout men have gone *philologically* through this *TEHELIM*, this book of Hebrew hymns, and have left us the rich results of their inquiries in volumes within the reach of every Biblical student. To do the mere verbal *hermeneutics* of this book, even as well as it has been done, would be to contribute nothing fresh in the way of evoking or enforcing its Divine ideas. A thorough HOMILETIC treatment it has never yet received, and to this work we here commit ourselves, determining to employ the best results of modern Biblical scholarship.

Our Method.—Our plan of treatment will comprise four sections:—(1.) The HISTORY of the passage. Lyric poetry, which the book is, is a delineation of living character; and the key, therefore, to unlock the meaning and reach the spirit of the words is a knowledge of the men and circumstances that the poet sketches with his lyric pencil.—(2.) ANNOTATIONS of the passage. This will include short explanatory notes on any ambiguous word, phrase, or allusion that may occur.—(3.) The ARGUMENT of the passage. A knowledge of the main drift of an author is amongst the most essential conditions for interpreting his meaning.—(4.) The HOMILETICS of the passage. This is our main work. We shall endeavour so to group the Divine ideas that have been legitimately deduced, as to suggest such thoughts, and indicate such sermonising methods, as may promote the proficiency of modern pulpit ministrations.

Subject: Fretful Envy of the Wicked. (3) Facts reveal
its Folly—(*continued*).

“I have seen the wicked in great power,
And spreading himself like a green bay-tree.
Yet he passed away, and, lo, he was not:
Yea, I sought him, but he could not be found.
Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright:
For the end of that man is peace.
But the transgressors shall be destroyed together:
The end of the wicked shall be cut off.
But the salvation of the righteous is of the Lord;
He is their strength in the time of trouble.
And the Lord shall help them, and deliver them;
He shall deliver them from the wicked,
And save them, because they trust in him.”

—Psalms xxxvii. 35-40.

HISTORY.—See Vol. XXXII., p. 266.

ANNOTATIONS.—Ver. 35, 36.—“*I have seen the wicked in great power, and spreading himself like a green bay-tree. Yet he passed away, and, lo, he was not: yea, I sought him, but he could not be found.*”

“I have seen a violent wicked man,
And he spread himself like an indigenous tree of luxuriant foliage.
And one passed by and, lo, he was not:
And I sought him and he was not to be found.”—*Delitzsch.*

“I saw a wicked one who was insolent and spread himself like a tree green and deep-rooted.”—*Hengstenberg.*

“I saw a wicked one, a terrible one, spreading himself like a green tree.”—*Alexander.*

There is no essential difference in the meaning between these renderings. The character described in all cases is a terribly wicked man, in secular circumstances of most imposing and gorgeous affluence. “*And, lo, he was not.*” The idea is that he disappeared, and that his disappearance was unexpected. The tree had been so long rooted in its native soil, and appeared so strikingly stalwart and splendid in the social forest that its disappearance was a matter of great surprise. I could scarcely believe that the man who so shortly before had made so great a figure must already come to nothing, so that I cast about for him in every direction.

Ver. 37.—“*Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright: for the end of that man is peace.*” The end here is supposed to refer not only to the future state, but to future blessedness. Delitzsch renders the clause—“The man of peace hath a posterity.” The writer here appeals to the general experience of his readers, and calls upon them to judge for themselves.

Ver. 38.—“*But the transgressors shall be destroyed together: the end of the wicked shall be cut off.*” This verse, and the other verses to the end of the Psalm, are scarcely more than a repetition of the contrast between the destiny of the wicked and that of the upright. Luther closes his exposition of this Psalm with the words: “O shame on our faithlessness, mistrust, and vile unbelief, that we do not believe such rich, powerful, consolatory declarations of God, and take up so readily with little grounds of offence, whenever we but hear the wicked speeches of the ungodly. Help, O God, that we may once attain to right faith. Amen.”

ARGUMENT.—See Vol. XXXII., page 267.

HOMILETICS:—The Psalmist here puts the character, secular prosperity, and end of the wicked in contrast with that of the righteous, in order further to show the egregious folly of fretful envy concerning the wicked. These verses lead us to look at the wicked in three aspects—as favoured with great secular prosperity, as swept unexpectedly from the earth, and as standing in striking contrast to the righteous.

I. AS FAVOURED WITH GREAT SECULAR PROSPERITY. He appeared to the Psalmist as a “green bay-tree,” a tree that flourished in its native soil, whose branches expanded in all directions, and whose leafage was luxurious and gorgeous. In all ages and lands wicked men rank amongst the most wealthy, grand, and powerful of the earth. Thoughtful piety has at all times been perplexed at this. Good men have wondered, and still wonder, why, under the government of a Holy Father, His most disobedient offspring should seem the most temporally favoured by His Providence. Though we cannot understand why it *should* be so, we can understand why it is so.

First: *Material nature, from which man draws all his secular good, pays no regard to moral character.* It treats all men alike. The laws and elements of matter know nothing of moral distinctions. Old ocean will dash with as much fury against a missionary fleet as against a fleet of pirates and brigands. The minerals of the mountains and the soil of the earth will yield as readily their treasures to the skilful and industrious touch of a demon as of a saint.

Secondly: *Greed for gain is one of the strongest passions in the heart of the wicked.* The strongest cry of the righteous is, “Where shall wisdom be found?” “Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?” “Teach me Thy statutes?” but that of the wicked is, “What shall we eat, what shall we drink, where-withal shall we be clothed?” “How shall we amass a fortune, get power, and make a show in the world?” Secular prosperity is that after which the wicked is in earnest and constant quest, and it is no wonder, since nature is as willing to give

it to them as to any other, they should get what they so diligently search for.

Thirdly: *The efforts of the wicked are not restricted by moral considerations.* Taking the world as it is, the more cunning, falsehood, fraud, and the less conscience a man has, if he is temperate, economical, and industrious, the more rapidly he will win the richest prizes of material good. No credit is due to a man for becoming rich: the most morally contemptible men we have known are men who in a few short years have made large fortunes. What public man has not seen miserable weeds in social life becoming green bay-trees, throwing the shadow of their luxuriant branches over trees of God's own planting?

The wicked is presented to us here—

II. AS SWEPT UNEXPECTEDLY FROM THE EARTH. "Yet he passed away, and, lo, he was not."

First: *Though he appeared, the last time he was seen, strong, he is gone.* The tree seemed stalwart when last beheld. It was not an exotic, it was an indigenous plant, it had apparently struck its roots deep in the earth, its branches seemed gnarled with mighty muscles, and its branches seemed firm, but it was swept from the earth. To drop the figure, he seemed the strongest man in the circle, but he is gone. He had been struck down as by an electric bolt.

Secondly: *Though he appeared the most important object in the scene, he is gone.* Wherever you went you saw this green bay-tree, its branches seemed to touch every point of your circle. You travelled through the rustic road—there were his fields; through the streets—there were his houses. You met his servants, his cattle, or something belonging to him wherever you went. He was the great man in the neighbourhood, the country squire, the local magnate—but he is gone; he is withered to the roots, and every part of him is gone to dust. Truly, "the triumphing of the wicked is short, and the joy of the hypocrite but for a moment; though his excellency mount up to the heavens and his head into the clouds, he shall perish for ever. They which have seen him shall say, where

is he? He shall fly away, as a dream he shall not be found.
Yea, he shall be chased away as a vision of the night."

"To-day he puts forth
The tender leaves of hopes, to-morrow blossoms,
And bears his blushing honours thick upon him.
The third day comes a frost, a killing frost :
And—when he thinks, good easy man, full surely
His greatness is a ripening—nips his root,
And then he falls as I do."—*Shakespeare*.

Here we have the wicked presented to us—

III. AS STANDING IN STRIKING CONTRAST TO THE RIGHTEOUS.
"Mark the perfect man," &c. (ver. 37—40). These verses to the end of the chapter present a contrast to three things.

First: In relation to *character*. The good are in these verses called "perfect," "upright," "righteous." All these terms stand for the same thing—moral excellence. The wicked are spoken of as "transgressors:" they outrage the everlasting principles of virtue, truth, and happiness; they are violators of the moral laws of the universe. They are contrasted—

Secondly: In relation to their *end*. Tholuck renders this sentence, "It shall go well with such a man." Peace is evermore the end of a good man—peace of conscience, peace with God, peace that passeth all understanding. "I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours." In truth, the death scene of the righteous has generally been a peaceful scene. What said Luther in dying? "God is the Lord by whom we escape death." What said Baxter? "I have pain, there is no arguing against sense; but I have peace, peace." In truth, thousands have felt this peace in death.

"How blest the righteous when he dies," &c. But look at the end of the wicked. He is "destroyed," "cut off." Language this implying something terrible in the end. Voltaire, the renowned infidel, addressing his doctor, said, "I

will give you half what I am worth if you will give me six months' life." The doctor answered, "Sir, you cannot live six weeks." Voltaire replied, "Then I shall go to hell, and you will go with me," and soon after expired.

They are contrasted—

Thirdly: In relation to *God*. He is the destroyer of the wicked. By the stroke of judgment he strikes down the green bay-tree. But what is He to the righteous? "The Lord shall help them and deliver them: He shall deliver them from the wicked, and save them because they trust in Him."

CONCLUSION. Mark, then, the perfect man. Mark well the contrast between the wicked and the righteous: the contrast in relation to their character, their end, and their God. Mark it well, and you will have no envy to the wicked.

Homiletic Sketches on the Book of Job.

The Book of Job is one of the grandest sections of Divine Scripture. It has never yet, to our knowledge, been treated in a purely Homiletic method for Homiletic ends. Besides many learned expositions on the book found in our general commentaries, we have special exegetical volumes of good scholarly and critical worth: such as Drs. Barnes, Wemyss, Mason Good, Noyes Lee, Delitzsch, and Herman Hedwick Bernard: the last is in every way a masterly production. For us, therefore, to go into philology and verbal criticism, when such admirable works are available to all students, would be superfluous, if not presumption. Ambiguous terms, when they occur, we shall of course explain, and occasionally suggest an improved rendering: but our work will be chiefly, if not entirely, Homiletic. We shall essay to bring out from the grand old words those Divine verities which are true and vital to man as man in all lands and ages. These truths we shall frame in an order as philosophic and suggestive as our best powers will enable us to do; and this in order to help the earnest preachers of God's Holy Word.

Subject: Job's Argument with his Three Friends. (3) The remonstrances that he employs against the doctrine that God treats men here according to character.

"Lo, mine eye hath seen all this,
Mine ear hath heard and understood it.
What ye know, the same do I know also:
I am not inferior unto you.

Surely I would speak to the Almighty,
 And I desire to reason with God.
 But ye are forgers of lies,
 Ye are all physicians of no value.
 O that ye would altogether hold your peace !
 And it should be your wisdom.
 Hear now my reasoning,
 And hearken to the pleadings of my lips;
 Will ye speak wickedly for God ?
 And talk deceitfully for him ?
 Will ye accept his person ?
 Will ye contend for God ?
 Is it good that he should search you out ?
 Or, as one man mocketh another, do ye so mock him ?
 He will surely reprove you,
 If ye do secretly accept persons.
 Shall not his excellency make you afraid ?
 And his dread fall upon you ?
 Your remembrances are like unto ashes,
 Your bodies to bodies of clay.
 Hold your peace, let me alone,
 That I may speak, and let come on me what will.
 Wherefore do I take my flesh in my teeth,
 And put my life in mine hand ?
 Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him :
 But I will maintain mine own ways before him.
 He also shall be my salvation :
 For an hypocrite shall not come before him.
 Hear diligently my speech
 And my declaration with your ears.
 Behold now I have ordered my cause ;
 I know that I shall be justified.
 Who is he that will plead with me ?
 For now, if I hold my tongue, I shall give up the ghost."

—Job. xiii. 1—19.

EXOGETICAL REMARKS.—*Ver. 1.*—"Lo, mine eye hath seen all this," &c.
 The meaning of this is, I am acquainted with all the maxims you have just quoted.

Ver. 2.—"What ye know, the same do I know also : I am not inferior unto you." This is a repetition of the third verse of the preceding chapter. The idea is, I have an understanding heart, I am not inferior to you in this respect.

Ver. 3.—"Surely I would speak to the Almighty, and I desire to reason with God." The idea seems to be,—I would turn from you who are so censorious and severe, and do injustice to my motives, to the Omniscient One Who knows the heart. I will lay my cause before Him.

Ver. 4.—"But ye are forgers of lies." You are sophists in religious questions; your positions are all false; there is no real foundation for the sentiments you have advanced. "*Physicians of no value.*" The remedies you apply to me are utterly unsuited: instead of soothing and healing, you only aggravate my pain.

Ver. 5.—"O that ye would altogether hold your peace." In Prov. xvii. 28 we read, "Even a fool when he holdeth his peace is counted wise." This proverb may possibly have been current in the days of Job, and if so, the verse before us must have been intended as a delicate *repartee* to Eliphaz, who in chap. v. 2 had in plain language stigmatised his unfortunate friend as a fool and a simpleton, and now in return must hear the following delicately-expressed but deeply-cutting words. Would that you were altogether silent, and it would be accounted to you for wisdom. It would be much wiser in you not to speak at all, than to oppose my arguments and just complaints with a deluge of empty and unmeaning words.—*Bernard.*

Ver. 7.—"Will ye speak wickedly for God? and talk deceitfully for him?" The idea seems to be, Will you advocate false positions in the cause of God, and talk deceitfully, urge fallacious arguments to justify His ways with man? This is often done.

Ver. 8.—"Will ye accept his person? Will ye contend for God?" Will you, in order to curry favour with Him, speak against your own conscience? Will you, from partiality to God, maintain unrighteous views? "*Will ye contend for God?*" Do you presume to be His authorised and lawful advocates?

Ver. 9.—"Is it good that he should search you out?" Can you expect that He will brook your saying things which in your hearts you know to be untrue? Will you mock Him as one mocketh frail man? You may impose upon man with your arguments, but Omniscience sees through your fallacies.

Ver. 10.—"He will surely reprove you," &c. Will God justify your falsehoods because they are uttered in His defence? Man would do so, but He will not. Lies spoken for Him are as abhorrent to His nature as lies spoken on His behalf.

Ver. 11.—"Shall not his excellency make you afraid?" &c. "Shall not his majesty affront you?"—*Dr. Lee.* "The general proposition,"

says Barnes, "is, The sense of the majesty and glory of God should at times fill the mind with solemn awe and produce the deepest veneration."

Ver. 12.—"Your remembrances are like unto ashes." "Nearly all commentators vary. *Heath*: 'Are not your lessons empty proverbs?'—*Good*: 'Dust are your stored-up sayings.'—*Sept.*: 'Your boasting shall pass away like ashes.'—*Noyes*: 'Your maxims are words of dust.' 'Your bodies to bodies of clay.'—*Good*: 'Your collections, collections of mire.'—*Buxtoff*, *Crinsoz*, *Heath*, and others: 'Your high-flown speeches.' The idea is that the arguments behind which they intrenched themselves were like clay, and could not resist an attack made upon them."—*Elzas*.

Ver. 13.—"Hold your peace, let me alone, that I may speak, and let come on me what will." "One cannot but be forcibly reminded by this verse of the Greek philosopher who said, 'Strike, but hear me.'"

Ver. 14.—"Wherefore do I take my flesh in my teeth, and put my life in mine hand?" Amongst the different interpretations of this verse the idea I gather from it is this, Wherefore should I risk my life in speaking out my convictions? It is as if he had said, Because I feel them to be well-founded I will speak them out, though it cost me my life.

Ver. 15.—"Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him, but I will maintain my own ways before him." "The sentiment here expressed is one of the noblest that could fall from the lips of man. It indicates unwavering confidence in God even in death."—*Barnes*.

Ver. 16.—"He also shall be my salvation, for an hypocrite shall not come before him." The first clause is an expression of the same confidence as that contained in the previous verse, and the last, "an hypocrite shall not come before Him," implies a deep consciousness of his own sincerity.

Ver. 17.—"Hear diligently my speech and my declaration with your ears." Hear ye, then, diligently my conclusion, and receive my reproof with your ears. Attend to my declaration of confidence in God and to the conviction I have uttered.

Ver. 18.—"Behold now, I have ordered my cause; I know that I shall be justified." The meaning of this is, I have made my statement, delivered my sentiment, and I know that God will acquit me.

Ver. 19.—"Who is he that will plead with me?" As if he had said, After this who will say a word, who will dare controvert my statements? I am certain that my positions are incontrovertibly true. "If I hold my tongue, I shall give up the ghost." I think Dr. Bernard has struck

the meaning of the whole verse in the following words : " But who is he that will plead with me ? I am quite prepared with my defence, but I do not see my accuser. Who is he ? Where is he ? If I am to be tried, no time should be lost, for presently I shall be silent and give up the ghost, when of course all chance of clearing myself will be gone for ever."

HOMILETICS. All these verses may be taken as Job's remonstrance with his friends against the doctrine that God deals here with man according to his character ; and in this remonstrance there emerges into prominence several useful subjects of thought, such as mental independence in religion, Godwardness of soul in religion, wicked sophistry in religion, God-dishonouring zeal in religion, irresistibility of strong conviction in religion, unconquerableness of trust in religion, and consciousness of sincerity in religion.

I. MENTAL INDEPENDENCY IN RELIGION. " Lo, mine eye hath seen all this, mine ear hath heard and understood it. What ye know, the same do I know also : I am not inferior unto you " As the subject of mental independence in religion was discussed in our article on chap. xii. 1—5,* we need not enlarge upon it here. Though all men are not equal in the measure of mental power or mental attainment, yet in relation to God all stand on the same footing, " the rich and the poor meet together." All have the same right to form their convictions of religion, to express them, and to work them out. The poorest and most illiterate man in the world in this respect may say to the greatest hierarch, even to the supreme Pontiff himself, " I am not inferior to you, I am as near to God as you are, and stand in the same relations."

II. GODWARDNESS OF SOUL IN RELIGION. " Surely I would speak to the Almighty, and I desire to reason with God." Religion has a human aspect, which is philanthropy, sympathising with men and working for their good, but here it has Divine aspects, *speaking to God*. " I would speak to the Almighty." Speaking to God—First: *Implies the highest practical recognition of the Divine existence.* Aye, and in His

* See page 77.

existence as *personal*, as *proximate*, as *accessible*. Speaking to God—Secondly: *Involves the truest relief of our social natures.* We have social natures, and the highest, and indeed the only perfect, satisfaction of those natures is to be found in fellowship with the Infinite. Before a man will fully unbosom his soul to another he must be certified of three things—

(1) *That the other feels the deepest interest in him.* (2) *Will make the fullest allowance for his infirmities.* (3) *Will assist him in his trials.* The Almighty gives us this assurance.

Speaking to God is—

Thirdly: *The most effective method of spiritual discipline.* The effort of speaking to God is most quickening, humbling, most spiritualising to the soul. Speaking to God—

Fourthly: *Reveals the highest honour of created spirit.* It implies a great capacity. The sublimest distinction of a man is the power to speak to the Almighty.*

III. WICKED SOPHISTRY IN RELIGION. "Ye are forgers of lies." Job regarded his friends as uttering that which was false in relation to God. Perhaps more lies are forged in connection with religion than in connection with any other department of life. Passing by the religions of heathendom, what lies are found in nearly all the creeds of Christendom! The creed-makers of all sects have in all ages, unintentionally it may be in most cases, been forging lies. What lies every Sunday are proclaimed in relation to the great questions of atonement, the Divine character, the responsibilities of man, &c. Beware of the lies of religion. Two thoughts are here suggested in connection with religious lies:—

First: *They cannot heal the soul.* "Ye are all physicians of no value." They may act, and often do, as stimulants or anodynes, but they cannot heal the broken heart, they cannot strengthen the infirm moral soul. They can no more refresh the soul than the mirage the thirsty traveller.

Secondly: *They are an offence to a true man.* "O that ye would altogether hold your peace!" From God's own testi-

* For a further development of these remarks see "Homilist," Series I., Vol. V., page 408.

mony we are assured that Job was a true-hearted man, with healthy moral intuitions. As a rule, nothing is more offensive to a great intuitional nature than logical processes; the man of intuition sees the truth at once, and feels an error as the tender flower a blast of cold air. He is impatient with logic; but when that logic is the vehicle for religious fallacies he cries out from the depths of his soul, "O that ye would altogether hold your peace!" Many true-hearted men are driven from our churches by the logic of empty dogmas.

IV. GOD-DISHONOURING ZEAL IN RELIGION. "Hear now my reasoning, and hearken to the pleadings of my lips. Will ye speak wickedly for God? and talk deceitfully for Him? Will ye accept His Person? will ye contend for God?" Job here calls their attention to the fact that the views they were setting forth so zealously in honour of the Almighty were really wicked. Three thoughts are here suggested:—

First: *Men sometimes set forth false views in order to honour God.* "Will ye talk deceitfully for Him?" The idea is, Will you, in order to defend the proceedings of your Maker, declare fallacies and propound erroneous doctrines? Will you, by showing partiality to Him, propound untruths? Will you by fallacies contend for Him? Does He want such defence? Men often do this. Doctrines are frequently preached and propagated, with the view of honouring God, which are most derogatory to His character. It would be easy to specify those doctrines, but as we have no space here for their exposure we must pass them by.

Secondly: *Those views are an insult to the Almighty, and exposed to His displeasure.* "Is it good that he should search you out? Or, as one man mocketh another, do ye so mock him?" The Almighty does not require His conduct to be defended by sophistries; nay, such sophistries are an insult to Him, they "mock" Him. You cannot defend God by your theological systems, "He will surely reprove you." He will one day chastise you for this conduct.

Thirdly: *Those views are irreverent and rotten.* (1) *Irreverent.* "Shall not His excellency make you afraid?" Who

are you, ignorant mortal child of an hour, that you should stand up in the defence of the Almighty? His excellency "should make you afraid." Holy and reverent is His name.

(2) *Rotten*. "Your remembrances are like unto ashes; your bodies to bodies of clay." "The passage here means that the arguments behind which they entrenched themselves were like clay. They could not resist an attack made upon them, but would easily be thrown down like mud walls. Grotius renders it, 'Your towers are tumuli of clay.' Rosenmüller remarks on the verse that the ancients were accustomed to inscribe sentences of valuable historical facts on pillars. If these were engraved on stone they would be permanent, if on pillars covered with clay, they would soon be obliterated. On a pillar or column at Alexandria the architect cut his own name at the base deep in the stone; on the plaster or stucco with which the pillar was covered he inscribed the name of the person to whose honour it was reared. The consequence was that that name became soon obliterated, his own then appeared, and was permanent. But the meaning here is rather that the apothegms and maxims behind which they entrenched themselves were like mud walls, and could not withstand an attack."

V. IRREPRESSIBILITY OF CONVICTION IN RELIGION. "Hold your peace, let me alone, that I may speak, and let come on me what will. Wherefore do I take my flesh in my teeth, and put my life in mine hand?" The idea is, as we have seen, I will speak out, whatever happens to me. No amount of suffering, not death itself shall prevent me from giving utterance to my convictions, my ideas have become irrepressible forces. Strong religious convictions are always irrepressible. Jeremiah felt them as fire in his bones, and he could not keep silent. The apostle before his judges said, "We cannot but speak the things we have seen and heard." Paul said, "Necessity is laid upon me to preach the gospel." Bigotry in all ages has tried to suppress the moral convictions of men: the attempt is more mad than the attempt to prevent the volcanic fires from riving the mountains by covering them

with cement. A man may suppress his convictions on other subjects, such as literature, science, art, but so vital are religious convictions to him that they fill his nature with fires that must break out.

VI. UNCONQUERABLENESS OF TRUST IN RELIGION. "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in Him." In this expression we have three things.

First: *A manifest possibility.* The Creator has the power to blot His creature out of existence.

Secondly: *A lamentable calamity.* To be slain, to be quenched out of being, to think, feel, act no more. What a calamity! Nature revolts with inconceivable horror at the idea.

Thirdly: *A triumphant piety.* Though the worse of all possible calamities happen "I will trust in Him." This is sublime: and it is right and wise.

VII. CONSCIOUSNESS OF SINCERITY IN RELIGION. "He also shall be my salvation: for an hypocrite shall not come before Him." Job felt he was no hypocrite, and because he believed this—

First: *He knew he should be saved.* "He shall be my salvation." Because he was conscious of sincerity.

Secondly: *He was not afraid to speak.* "Hear diligently my speech, and my declaration with your ears." A man with a clear conscience can stand fearlessly before the world. He is not afraid to speak out in thunder what he believes. Because he was conscious of sincerity—

Thirdly: *He knew he should be acquitted of falsehood.* "I know that I shall be justified." All Job wanted was his case honestly gone into in order to prove him right. Because he was conscious of sincerity—

Fourthly: *He was content to leave his cause with justice.* "Who is he that will plead with me? For now, if I hold my tongue, I shall give up the ghost." That is, I will be silent and die. What he means is, I will maintain my cause, but I will speak no more. "If there is any one who can successfully contend with me, and can prove that my course cannot be vindicated, then I have no more to say, I will be silent and

die. I will submit to my fate without further argument, and without a murmur. I have said all that needs to be said, and nothing could remain but to submit and die."

Sermonic Glances at the Gospel of St. John.

As our purpose in the treatment of this Gospel is purely the development, in the briefest and most suggestive form, of Sermonic outlines, we must refer our readers to the following works for all critical inquiries into the author and authorship of the book, and also for any minute criticisms on difficult clauses. The works we shall especially consult are:—"Introduction to New Testament," by Bleek; "Commentary on John," by Tholuck; "Commentary on John," by Hengstenberg; "Introduction to the Study of the Gospels," by Westcott; "The Gospel History," by Ehrard; "Our Lord's Divinity," by Liddon; "St. John's Gospel," by Oosterzee; "Doctrine of the Person of Christ," by Dornor; Lange; &c., &c.

Subject : Christ's Vindication of Himself against the Charge of Blasphemy. (1) The Nature of His Authority.

(Continued from page 221.)

"Then answered Jesus and said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do : for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise. For the Father loveth the Son, and sheweth him all things that himself doeth : and he will shew him greater works than these, that ye may marvel. For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them ; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will. For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son : that all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son, honoureth not the Father which hath sent him. Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation ; but is passed from death unto life. Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God : and they that hear shall live. For as the Father hath life in himself, so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself ; and hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man. Marvel not at this : for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth ; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life ; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation. I can of mine own

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loveth the Son." Observe (1) the Father loves. He is not a being of cold intellectuality, He is a being of infinite affection. Whilst He is wise in counsel, He is tender in love. The Creator of the universe is a loving being, and His love is the fountal source of all activities. "God is love." Whilst some scientists represent the Almighty as an infinite stoic, hard as iron, unbending as fate, and certain religionists as capricious and malevolent, the Gospel reveals Him as LOVE.

"O love the one Sun, O love the one Sea ;
What life has begun that breathes not in Thee ?
Thy rays have no limit, Thy waves have no shore,
Thou giv'st without measure to worlds evermore."

(2) The chief object of the Father's love is the Son. His heart is centred on Him. "This is My beloved Son, in Whom I am well pleased." "The Father loveth the Son." But does He not love all? Yea, but the Son especially. The Son is greater, better, nearer to Himself than all else in the universe. If the Infinite Father's heart is on the Son, let our hearts centre on the same object, and then we in heart shall be one with the Great God. He claims:—

Thirdly: *Special revelations from the Father.* "He showeth Him all things that Himself doeth." Communicativeness is the instinct of love. The deepest things of the heart we reveal to the chief object of our affection. The Infinite Father keeps no secret from Christ. (1) All the great things that the Father has already done the Son knows. He has a complete insight into all the operations of the Infinite throughout immensity. Christ knows the universe thoroughly. Let us learn of Him. (2) The greater things that the Father has yet to do, the Son will also know. "Greater works than these." The works of the Lord are great, sought out of all them that have pleasure in them. What He has already done is great, incomprehensibly great, but what He has to do in the future is greater still. "Greater works." What the Eternal has done in the ages that are past may be only a faint indication of what He will do throughout the eternities

that are to dawn. Christ knows all. But perhaps the "greater works" mentioned here are the greater works in human history referred to in the following verses. And at these works men will "marvel." He claims:—

Fourthly: *Special prerogatives of the Father.* Christ here seems to claim several prerogatives of the Father.

(1) Power to awaken the dead according to His own will. "As the Father raiseth up the dead and quickeneth them, even so the Son quickeneth whom He will." Who but God can quicken life? An insect may destroy the majestic cedar of Lebanon, but God alone can restore the drooping flower.

This power Christ claims. The Son does the same as the Father—does it without restraint, control, or direction. "Whom He will." Does it "according to His own good pleasure." The worse death is the death of souls, and the most important work is the quickening of dead souls. This Christ does. And this is a Divine prerogative (Rom. iv. 17). (2) Authority to judge humanity and to receive its worship. "The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son, that all men should honour the Son even as they honour the Father," &c. When it is denied that the Father judgeth men it is done in the same way in which, in verse 19, chap. vii. 17, it is denied that the Son can do anything of Himself—that is in isolation from the Father. Christ is the Judge, Matt. xxv.; Acts vii. 23. But whilst He has authority to judge the world, He has also authority to receive its worship. "That all men should honour the Son even as they honour the Father." Worship is here claimed by Christ. "Let all the angels of God worship Him." He is worshipped in heaven. "Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power," &c. "Every knee shall bow to Him of things in heaven and things on earth," &c., &c.

(3) Capacity for redeeming humanity from condemnation and death. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that heareth My word, and believeth on Him that sent Me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation: but is passed from death unto life."

Observe (a) that human souls are in a state of moral guiltiness and death. Their guilt is a matter of universal consciousness, and their death is proved by their insensibility to the beauty of holiness and the claims of God. (b) That Christ's word has the power to effect the restoration of human souls. "He that heareth My word, and believeth on Him that sent Me," &c. And again, "The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live." Faith in Him is the soul-restoring power. All that the greatest of human or angelic teachers can do is to communicate information. Christ alone clears away guilt, and breathes new life—a life that is everlasting.

(4) The possession of absolute life and judicial administration. "As the Father hath life in Himself, so hath He given to the Son to have life in Himself: and hath given Him authority to execute judgment also, because He is the Son of man." Life in Himself, unoriginative, independent, eternal. "Who only hath immortality dwelling in the light," &c., &c. Such life is the life of God, and God only. Then judicial administration, too, is His: "to execute judgment." Not merely to judge, but to administer justice. Is not this a Divine prerogative? In His judicial capacity He will raise the dead and determine the destinies of mankind. "Marvel not at this, for the hour is coming, in the which all they that are in the graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth." In verse 25 a spiritual resurrection was referred to. There are at least three theories of the resurrection. One is the coming forth of the body, the very body that was committed to the grave. This idea is at once against science and against Scripture: the sameness between the buried and the resurrection body is not the sameness in particle and proportion, but the sameness in figure and function.

Another idea is, the resurrection body is something that comes out of some indestructible "germ," or "bone," or "monad," which lay hid in the buried frame. And the other idea is that the resurrection body is the ideal form of the body

which lies in the spirit, and goes out of it at death. Bush, Maurice, and others, regard the present body as the grave of the spirit, and when the spirit departs in death it goes off to the spiritual world in a spiritual body. Without canvassing these theories, or pronouncing on their merits, the verse brings under notice four subjects: (a) The Resurrection *period*. "The hour is coming." It is not something past: it awaits us. (b) The Resurrection *power*. "His voice." This is the quickening force. (c) The Resurrection *subjects*. "All that are in their graves." Not a class, not a generation, but "*all*." (d) The Resurrection *issues*. "They that have done good unto the resurrection of life; they that have done evil unto the resurrection of damnation." Conduct, not creed, determines destiny. Well-doing—heaven: ill-doing—hell.

Germes of Thought.

Subject: Holiness.

"Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord: looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled."—Heb. xii. 14.

WE have to do with a holy God, we have for our guidance a holy Bible, we hope to reach a holy heaven. He that hath this hope in him, purifieth himself, even as He is pure; takes for his motto, "Holiness unto the Lord." This was upon Aaron's forehead, and it shall ultimately be upon the bells or bridles of the horses. That is, ploughboys, or any one engaged in legitimate employment, shall be enabled to render their engagements as acceptable to God as the most sacerdotal employments conceivable. The Levitical economy taught the necessity of holiness. It sacrifices without blemish—its washings, sprinklings, and cleans-

ings, all pointed to this. The Epistle to the Hebrews is the best commentary on Leviticus. Here we find the pure offering, and the sinless high-priest. This tells us of a more acceptable offering than Abel's, and of richer blood than his. The previous chapter has illustrated the nature and power of faith. What wonders have been wrought under the power of this principle! Those mighty heroes are interested in us, and are watching our demeanour. They may be helpful to us in more senses than we know. God is interested in us too, and helps us as only He can. He is prepared to lay out all He has and is to promote our well-being and bring us to heaven. He is operating upon us to make us like Himself. He wants us with Him for ever, and without holiness no man can see the Lord.

I. THE BLESSINGS OF HOLINESS. God has many blessings to dispense, and He gives us health, wealth, and friends, which rightly used make probation blissful; but we want all He is, and this He gives us, to fit us for our blissful hereafter. The text speaks of—

Personal holiness. Men generally are far from this. The Bible and universal experience accord, and are decisive on this point. To attain it, renunciation of sin is imperative. A rebel once sent a diadem to Cæsar, who replied, "First throw down your arms, and then offer gifts." The rebel against God, who wants restoration to His image, must first ground arms to Calvary's Prince. Pardon is a necessity. The transgressions of the past must be blotted out. The destruction of sin is a preparation for it. No peace in Mansoul till the Diabolonians are destroyed. You must gather stones and weeds from your field before you can grow crops to profit, and so there is much within to be destroyed before the fruits of the Spirit will come to perfection. We consider holiness to be conformity to God's revealed will, and growth in the graces of the Holy Spirit. We need not stay to enumerate these. Christ is its example. Think of His superiority to sense and passion, and the opinions of the world; His simple devotion to truth; His unambitious goodness; His holy,

harmless, undefiled life; and He left us an example that we should follow His steps. The indwelling Spirit is the life and power of holiness. We are to be filled with this, and this life within will show itself in development as does the life of a flower, a plant, a man. A growth in all goodness; increasing conformity to Christ; admiration of Him, and love to Him.

Universal peace. Holiness brings a state of inexpressible peace to its possessor. His mind is stayed on God, and He keeps his mind in perfect peace. He is not distressed as are others about the occurrences around him. He can trust God to work out the issues of His own pure will. Amid the storms and hurricanes of life his anchor holds fast within the vail. The universal prevalence of holiness would destroy the spirit of war. Its possessor loves God with all his heart, and his neighbour as himself; and how could he allow himself in such an infernal employment? He seeks no truce with sin, he declares war to the knife with that, and proclaims a life-long hostility to all hell and its agencies. A person once said to another, "Is yours a fighting or a loving holiness?" and he got for reply, "I feel nothing but love in my soul, and a peace as sweet as heaven; but these very elements make me hate sin, and oppose the devil with all my might."

II. THE WAY TO HOLINESS. There are some things around us which may appear desirable, but they are not for us. However, the most important things are within our reach. By a right use of our faculties, most of us can get food and air. God sees to a supply of the most important things of all. He delegates this to no one; and so, holiness may be attained.

Grace is the source of it. The text speaks of the "grace of God." The stream comes from the fountain; light comes from the sun. What but the power and grace of God could effect this mighty change, and promote this wondrous growth! The concern of Deity for humanity was manifested in the gift of Christ Jesus, for the destruction of the works of the devil. In that opened fountain we see that man can be

cleansed from all sin ; that salvation is by grace through faith. That old oak in the forest has taken two centuries to come to perfection. There are existences known to science which come to perfection in less time than two days. Everything according to its own laws of growth. Faith lays hold on the power and grace of God, and in willing souls how rapidly will Jehovah perfect that which concerneth us. Let unshaken faith be exercised in the presence, power, sympathy, and purity of Jehovah, and by His mighty working within we shall speedily possess the mind which was in Christ. In limiting the attainments of obedient believing souls, are we not limiting the grace and power of God ?

Constant progress is necessary to it. This is the law of all life—pre-eminently of the Divine. There is no stagnation in that, here or hereafter. Rightly influenced, souls must eternally grow. There are souls which appear to be ever on the scent of corruption, and are evidently anxious to stir up strife ; but those on the way to heaven follow peace and holiness—follow this as the hound follows its prey, as the worldling follows his pleasure, as the miser follows wealth. Holiness is the pursuit of life. Heaven may be left out of the question for the present—that, and all other necessary good, will come to those whose souls follow hard after purity.

Diligence is a requisite in it. There will not be much growth, apart from weeds, without this. You know what the garden of the sluggard becomes, and such becomes the soul of the spiritually indolent. Men of average mind are sure to make progress in trade and commerce, with concentration of soul and persevering diligence ; and with all the wisdom, power, and grace of Jehovah to help them, they may with like spirit grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Let there be diligence in the study of the Divine word, and the eyes of your understanding will be enlightened ; diligence in attendance on Divine worship, for in the temple God meets and strengthens devout souls ; diligence in action in the field of Christian effort, for this

is the only sphere where some graces and strength can find development.

III. THE MOTIVES TO HOLINESS. There are many of these, but, from those indicated in the text we observe that—

Troublers are destroyed by it. "Roots of bitterness" must be destroyed, or they will "spring up, and trouble you." If your garden is made from forest land, and the trees' roots are left in, you will find the springing roots a great plague to you. There appear in many the remains of pride, unbelief, love of their own way, and other evil tempers; and in the presence of temptation and opposition these spring up and trouble them, and trouble their best friends also. There are ten thousand things in this world calculated to make these roots send forth their energy into life, but if they are evil they may be destroyed by the power of Divine grace. We are to be "filled with the Spirit." Souls have been "full of faith, and of the Holy Ghost," and such are "dead indeed unto sin."

Backsliding is prevented by it. We may "fail of the grace of God," or, as the margin has it, "fall from" the grace of God. We must use the grace given, and follow the light imparted, or we shall grieve the Spirit, and fall from our steadfastness. Pardon of sin, and adoption into the Divine family, are but the beginning of things. The blade must become the ear, and the ear must ripen under Heaven's sun. The babe must become a child, the child a young man, the young man a father in the Israel of God. Constant growth in goodness will prevent backsliding, but nothing else can.

Influence for good is increased by it. Professors of religion in any other state of soul "defile many" by their inconsistent life; but the life indicated is such a beautiful thing that, were it generally prevalent among religionists, multitudes would own its power. Butler, Paley, and Chalmers have put the thing to men's reason; we want a host of "living epistles" to put it to men's hearts. -

There is no heaven without it. You must submit to court

etiquette if you get an introduction to her Majesty. There may be exceptions, but there will be no exception at the court of heaven. There must be a moral fitness. Everlasting destiny hinges here—May enter without many things, but not without holiness.

Which way are you going, my brother ?

Do you not see the cause of your backsliding ?

What a mercy we may be saved by grace !

G. W.

SERMONIC NOTES ON THE VISIONS OF EZEKIEL.

No. X.

Subject : The Boiling Cauldron : the Doings and Doom of a Wicked City.

“ Again, in the ninth year, in the tenth month, in the tenth day of the month, the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Son of man, write thee the name of the day, even of this same day ; the king of Babylon set himself against Jerusalem this same day. And utter a parable unto the rebellious house, and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God, Set on a pot, set it on, and also pour water into it : Gather the pieces thereof into it, even every good piece, the thigh, and the shoulder ; fill it with the choice bones. Take the choice of the flock, and burn also the bones under it, and make it boil well, and let them seethe the bones of therein. Wherefore thus saith the Lord God, Woe to the bloody city, to the pot whose scum is therein, and whose scum is not gone out of it ! bring it out piece by piece ; let no lot fall upon it. For her blood is in the midst of her ; she set it upon the top of a rock ; she poured it not upon the ground to cover it with dust ; that it might cause fury to come up to take vengeance ; I have set her blood upon the top of a rock, that it should not be covered. Therefore thus saith the Lord God, Woe to the bloody city ! I will even make the pile for fire great. Heap on wood, kindle the fire, consume the flesh, and spice it well, and let the bones be burned. Then set it empty upon the coals thereof, that the brass of it may be hot, and may burn, and that the filthiness of it may be molten in it, that the scum of it may be consumed. She hath wearied herself with lies, and her great scum went not forth out of her : her scum shall be in the fire. In thy filthiness is lewdness : because I have purged thee, and thou wast not purged, thou shalt not be purged from thy filthiness any more, till I have

caused my fury to rest upon thee. I the Lord have spoken it ; it shall come to pass, and I will do it ; I will not go back, neither will I spare, neither will I repent : according to thy ways, and according to thy doings, shall they judge thee, saith the Lord God."—Ezekiel xxiv. 1—14.

THE Old not less than the New Testament reveals a social as well as a personal religion. There are to be seen records, laws, predictions, threatenings, promises concerning families, churches, villages, cities, nations, a whole world, as well as concerning individuals. But the principles that apply to the many, apply to the unit also. It is not more true that "the soul that sinneth, it shall die," than it is that the city that sins shall die. The Redeemer's tears were wept over lost souls, whilst they fell upon doomed Jerusalem. Hence it is that, both directly and indirectly, such a vision as that before us has practical lessons for every man.

We look *first* at this vision in its *primary and temporary significance*. The figure of the pot boiling down to a pulp the flesh and bones with which it was filled, and the pot still left to stand on the fire till it becomes red-hot, and so the poisonous rust, the verdigris is burnt out of it, is a very homely figure. It is so homely that it seems strange for the prophet to do a cook's work, and prepare and boil this cauldron of flesh and bones. But its strangeness is evidently designed to awaken the attention and inquiry of the people. But if the figure is homely, the fact it illustrates is very terrible. It is nothing less than the destruction of Jerusalem. And in repetition or addition to visions we have already noticed, the terrors of this destruction are here suggested as consisting (1) *In its remarkable certainty*. The year, the month, the very day is mentioned, and the nation has never forgotten in fasting and bewailing to recall its tragic days. (2) *In its cruel human agency*. Invested by the armies of Nebuchadnezzar, after an attack of eighteen months, in which famine and pestilence within the walls had been helping the engines of war without, the armed hosts crash victoriously through the streets, slaughtering multitudes of the people, whose blood stained the virgin marble of the temple courts. (3) *In its*

universal effects. Not only the common bones which were burnt to increase the fire, and which seem to symbolise the poor, who were more easily accessible, and the first to suffer, but also the good pieces of flesh, signifying all that gave beauty to society—the nobles and the Jewish ladies; and the chiefest bones, signifying those who gave support to the body of the state, the authorities, with the king at their head—all these suffered ruin in the city's doom. (4) *In its one and only cause.* That cause was the sin of Judah; and according to this vision that sin had been—(a) *Heinous.* For it is called “bloody,” by which epithet is portrayed not only the crime of murder, but other crimes that deserved death. (b) *Stubborn.* The “weariness” is God's, not theirs, and indicates the persistent sin of the people. (c) *Glaring.* “Blood on the top of the rock.” And so blood concealed by no shadow, and drunk in by no soft soil, is the emblem of brazen and defiant sins. Now we look at the vision—*Secondly*: In its permanent and universal teaching. And from the vision and its first fulfilment we gather—

I. THAT THE SINS OF ANY CITY ARE AN OFFENCE TO GOD. All the sins of any city are—(1) *Seen by Him.* To Him all evil is blood on the top of the rock. The whole city in its greed for gain, its intemperance, its hollowness, its lust, can ever truly cry, “Thou, God, seest me.” (2) *Seen by Him with anger.* Good and evil are not the same to God. He is a Moral Governor, and has the moral nature that breaks into the sunlight of a smile on goodness, and gathers into the thunder-cloud of a frown upon wickedness.

II. THAT THE SINS OF ANY CITY WILL ENSURE ITS DOOM. (1) *History illustrates this.* The cities of the plain, the dynasties of the old world, “Jerusalem that was a Paradise, but become a boiling pot,” are sufficient proofs. (2) *Prophecy predicts this.* (3) *The law of causation involves this.* The disease of sin naturally works the death of destruction. And so unless any city is purified from its “scum,” there must be fire to destroy.

III. THAT THE SINS OF ANY CITY CONCERN EVERY INDIVIDUAL.

VIDUAL INHABITANT. (1) *They bring sorrow on all.* What class in Jerusalem were free from the horrors of the siege? As in a former vision we saw all the trees of the forest, of its population, were fired, so in this we see all the parts of the body politic seethed in this cauldron. (2) *They give a mission to all.* Surely, whatever was the issue to the city, we find teaching enough in Ezekiel's prophecies to impress us with the fact of individual responsibility, and the ultimate safety of individuals, even though the city was destroyed. Hence learn—(1) *Seek to evangelise the entire city to save it.* (2) *Seek to convert individuals, that at least they may be saved.*
Bristol. URIAH R. THOMAS.

Subject : The Widow of Nain's Son.

"And he came and touched the bier; and they that bare him stood still. And he said, Young man, I say unto thee, Arise. And he that was dead sat up, and began to speak. And he delivered him to his mother."—St. Luke vii. 14, 15.

THE kingship of Christ over men was most clearly manifested by His calling forth the faith of His subjects in whatever condition of life or of death He found them. So that all Christ's acts upon earth will aid us in seeking for some satisfactory solution of the problem of our existence. And the only good result of the solution of such problem will be to aid in making us more like Him. To young men it must be especially interesting to contemplate one of their own age and class first as a departed spirit and then as a returned inhabitant of the earth and of Nain. Nor will the mothers and fathers of such be less concerned in this contemplation. For family life is so deep an object of Divine and human regard that all that affects it must appeal to the deepest feelings within us. So let us dwell on this act of Christ, teaching what there is in it.

I. THE ACT OF CHRIST DONE TO THE YOUNG MAN. This youth appears to have been at an age which places him between the ages of the daughter of Jairus and Lazarus, who

were also raised from the dead. He was on *the bier*, midway between the *deathbed* and *the grave*. So that the deed of Christ was done *at a funeral*. We who have taken part in the consignment to the grave of a relative or a friend know something of the sacredness of the sorrow which is felt on such occasions—a sorrow which sometimes lies too deep for tears, which sometimes produces a sense of hardness. On the other hand, there may be mourners over their own sense of want of sorrow; above all there will be the sense of guilt in the recollection of any wrong which has been done to the dead; even at any consciousness of the failure of love to the departed. Death in its awfulness makes us try conclusions with ourselves. The departed re-live their life within us in funereal recollections. We then look before and after and image ourselves and others in the condition of the dead and the departed. It is good to remember that Christ is an unseen guest at all our funerals.

He was visible at this funeral, and manifested His sympathy with the sorrowers, especially with the chief mourner—the widowed, childless mother, who little thought when she left her home with her dead son that she should meet with such a friend on her journey to the tomb. “The compassion to her which was expressed in Christ’s countenance must have brought to her the sense of a Divine compassion—thoroughly Divine, and therefore thoroughly human—of which she might have dreamed before, but which she had never realised.” What blessings she received by being the object of such compassionate sympathy we may well ponder upon. Every mourning widow has the same Friend.

Death had made fearful inroads on the family of this widow, but Christ will now make known that the departed are as much within His kingdom as they were “when the breath dwelt in the body, and whilst friends could look into their faces and smile upon them; that they were as much within the hearing of His voice as departed spirits as they would have been had they been living here visibly on the earth.” This act of restoring life, then, revealed Christ’s

nature and Christ's power. He is the Life-giver, therefore the restorer of families and of communities. The renewal of the mother's joy at the renewed life of her son on earth is not an object too low for the regard of Christ, though His complete purpose must have been the epiphany of Himself as the resurrection and the life of each human being—each member of the human family of which He is the Living Head—the First-born of the many brethren created in Him.

This act was done openly before men, but was not merely addressed to the eyes of those who saw it, but to their *faith*. The funeral was turned into a season of gladness, into an intercourse of reciprocated joy. We wonder whether our Redeemer went and shared the hospitality of the widow now that He has made her heart to sing for joy. All beholders would look upon Him with joy Who held the keys of death. Nothing here is esoteric or secret. Investigation into the event will only prove the greatness of the Divine Worker Who in all His acts reveals His character; not that there is love of display, but evidence of truth in all that He accomplishes.

The world is called to witness the deed of the Son of man, and to meditate its mysterious meaning.

II. PRINCIPLES REVEALED IN THE ACT. The importance of action is that it involves principle, or otherwise intimates the lack of it. The inner life of both man and God is made known by actions which can be taken account of. Here is the principle of the predominating life of God in Christ. Death is an interruption and disorder. The life of Christ restores to living order and beauty. The mysterious Power which, whilst it abides in the body, sustains its organisation, is under the controlling power and guidance of God. This could not be learnt so well by any other means as by the return of life at the command of Him Who declared Himself to be the Resurrection and the Life. He Who raises nature again from the grave of winter raises human powers of life out of the decaying and dying body.

Death assailed Him who now assailed it in the instance of

this youth, but that assault was made the means of manifesting His complete victory over death. Did not the Redeemer here see His own death and His own bereaved mother? So that here we have an enacted prophecy of His own resurrection and restored communion with His apostles, disciples, and mother. The mystery of death is explained by the higher mystery of life. The inspired child of God, like the poet, sees through life and death and through his own soul, and so the marvel of the everlasting will becomes an open scroll. The highest power in the universe is the *power of life*, the power of compassionate sympathy and love, the power of order. We could surely wish that so grand a Being as Christ should be king. None so worthy or so blessed to be king as He. We may wish Him to reign for ever and ever. Further, the realm of spirits is under the control of Christ. The voice of Christ must have penetrated to the regions of spirits. Whithersoever the spirit may depart at death, there Christ has the dominion. No spirit, or angel, or demon can be beyond the command of One Who manifests all power. Supreme power in the hands of the wisest and best is the most desirable thing in this world and in heaven. For then all spirits are accessible to the energy of the King Eternal Who calls us all now and ever to rise up and take from Him all the restoring power which we need for our life and immortal happiness.

This youth was not disobedient to the Voice that called him : he arose and came forth, whether he had been in a state of *torpor*, or of *torment*, or of *felicity*—that is, he was obedient to the Divine Voice of Christ. Young man, Christ addresses thee now by my voice, and says, Arise ! Arise out of sloth and imbecility ; arise out of selfishness and ease ; arise and come into light and communion with kindred friends and nation ; arise and be a witness for Christ and God. All things await thy uprising, and Christ's power is here. What is thy response ? Can it be, I will continue in disease and death ? Hark the voice without, the voice within. Come forth. Obey.

Plenary life is in Christ for each and all of us now. He

does not wait till we claim it, but He calls us and commands us to partake of it. O youth, wouldst thou give joy to the mother that bare thee, arise into Christian *life, purity, and truth*. Arise, indeed, thou must, either to shame or to life. Arise, shine, for thy Light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee.

W. R. PERCIVAL.

The Chief Founders of the Chief Faiths.

Around no men, amongst all the millions of mankind, does so much interest gather as around the Founders of the Chief Religious Faiths of the world. Such men are sometimes almost lost in the obscurity of remote ages, or of the mystery with which they surrounded themselves, or their early followers invested them. But whenever they can be discerned, their characters analysed, and their deeper experiences understood, they are found to be not only leaders and masters of the multitudes who have adopted more or less of their creed and ritual, but also interpreters (more or less partial) of the universal yearnings of the soul of man. Such men may have seemed to sit at the fountains of human thought and feeling, and to have directed or have coloured the mysterious streams, but they have quite as often indicated in their doctrines and in their deeds the strong courses of the thoughts and feeling which are more permanent and deeper than any one man or even any one age could completely discover. The aim of these papers will be, with necessary brevity, to review the chief of such men, noting suggestively rather than exhaustively, their *biography*, their *circumstances*, their *theology*, and their *ethics*. And in concluding the series it is purposed to compare and to contrast each and all of them with the "One Man whom in the long roll of ages we can love without disappointment, and worship without idolatry, the Man Christ Jesus."

PRINCIPAL BOOKS OF REFERENCE.—Max Müller's "History of Ancient Sanskrit Literature," "The Science of Language," "Chips from a German Workshop;" Rev. F. D. Maurice's "Religions of the World;" Archdeacon Hardwick's "Christ and other Masters;" Rev. J. W. Gardner's "Faiths of the World;" Miss Mary Carpenter's "Last Days of Rammohun Roy;" Rev. F. W. Farrar's "Witness of History to Christ;" Rev. A. W. Williamson's "Journey in North China;" Canon Liddon's Bampton Lecture on "Our Lord's Divinity;" Cousin's "History of Modern Philosophy;" S. Clarke's "Ten Great Religions;" Father Huc's "Christianity in China."

No. VI.

ZOROASTER.

(Continued from page 237.)

THEOLOGY.

WE have not now to analyse the theological tenets of what is called Zoroastrianism, because that, like every other system, has agglomerations that did not belong to the faith of its founder. The Magians, the servants

of the light, who were the very early founders of the Old Persian Faith, lived in a land, Professor Maurice reminds us, where the nights are clear and beautiful. "The stars were a language which spoke to peasant and priest alike of light coming out of darkness. On these the one will have meditated till he thought them powers and rulers of the world; the other will have paid them actual homage. The Magians, the servants of the light, will have devised a system of worship addressed to these." Zoroaster probably arose at a time when this worship had become very general. The object of his doctrine was to reform and purify that worship by recalling it to spiritualism—that is, by representing the sensible world as the envelope and symbol of the spiritual world. The Zendavesta, sacred writings attributed to him, contains a liturgy—a collection of hymns, prayers, invocations, thanksgivings, and a cosmogony. The liturgy, in the midst of a multitude of prayers and ceremonial prescriptions, contains some doctrinal notions of a strange description. It taught that Ormuz, the acknowledged Lord of Light, was antagonised by Ahriman, the Prince of Darkness. The battle between the two will be long, but Ormuz must triumph at last, for in the end there will be a universal restoration. Ahriman himself shall be purified, evil shall be subdued, and the antagonisms of creation shall disappear. For Ahriman shall cause a comet to fall on the earth to gratify his own destructive propensities; then he will, against his own will, really be serving the Infinite Being, named "*Time without Bounds*," who produced both Ormuz and Ahriman. For the conflagration caused by this comet will change the whole earth into a stream like melted iron, through which all beings must pass. The righteous to the dwellings of the just: all sinners into a purifying abyss, from which after three days and nights they will, on invoking Ormuz, proceed to heaven. Afterwards Ahriman himself and all in the abyss will be purified by this fire, all evil will be consumed, and all darkness banished.

The method of salvation therefore is an eternal battle for good against evil, the great aim is to be holiness, for all the

woe in the world had its root in sin. He further states that the worship of Ormuz must not be a worship of the material, that would be to be led away by Ahriman. If the sun therefore became the great symbol of worship, it was to be regarded as an image and counterfeit of something within. In this spirit his early followers had in all their temples, as well as in their houses, fire continually burning upon their altars; and while they held in greatest horror all worship of idols, they held fire in highest veneration as being, with the sun, the purest symbol of the Divine Being. All these notions existed before Zoroaster: "he seems to have organised into clearer thought the pre-existent myths, and inspired them with moral ideas and vital power."

Bristol.

URIAH R. THOMAS.

The Preacher's Scrap Room.

SHORT ESSAYS.

IDEAL SUFFERING.

PEOPLE often wonder, on looking back upon some event or circumstance, which pained them exceedingly at the time of its occurrence, how they could possibly have been so affected by what now appears such a trifling cause. And thus Dr. Johnson, displaying thereby his wonted sagacity, once recommended as an antidote to many of the small ills of life, the due remembrance of this phase of experience—the reflecting, when such ills threaten to plunge us into immoderate grief, how petty they will seem to have been should we recall them in future years. But while it is perfectly true that bygone trials often assume vastly diminished proportions when beheld across the hazy past, the converse also frequently holds good; the recollection of a former sorrow is not uncommonly the cause of more poignant, if transient, pain to the mind than was the actual endurance of the sorrow in the first instance. Nor is it difficult to account for this. When we recall a sad experience, for the moment we

suffer it once again, but are not stimulated to combat the affliction, are not cheered by hope in the bright future, as we generally are under even our direst misfortunes. The same cause also helps to make anticipated trials so much more severe than they usually prove to be when they arrive. Contemplating future ills, in imagination we suffer them, but are animated by no stimulus and no hope.

INTELLECTUAL PREACHING.

The great fault of a large majority of the most intellectual preachers of the present day is, that practically they rest satisfied with a result short of that which it should be the aim of a preacher to accomplish. In fact, they are too didactic. Having done their best to convince their hearers' minds of certain truths—philosophical or doctrinal—which, it must be admitted, are generally of vital importance, they too frequently consider their task at an end. They are thus often mere moral lecturers—very fine ones, perhaps, but still only lecturers. Not, however, that this didactic style of preaching is not much needed. Most disgraceful is the ignorance of a large number of religious people, otherwise intelligent, on the reasons for their faith; and proportionately weak will that faith in the majority of these cases probably be. We want, indeed, a wider diffusion of such preaching at the present time; preaching which, while it appeals to the heart, shall not ignore the head. And, by-and-by, when, under the influence of the "Elementary Schools Act," education becomes more general, even greater will be the necessity for something besides mere sentiment in sermons. In particular, we require more scientific preachers—men who shall endeavour to reconcile the apparent discrepancies which exist between the teachings of Scripture and those of Science. *Apparent* they can alone be; for both Scripture and Science are true, and truth cannot contradict truth. But, in the meantime, the minds of many people who have not the ability or the leisure for profound study of these subjects, are unnecessarily troubled by the revolutions of modern philosophic research.

Where exception should be taken to the kind of preaching under consideration is when it is carried to extremes; when the preacher seldom seems to get beyond the idea of looking upon his congregation as a huge philosophy or divinity class. If that preacher is unwise who ministers to the emotional part of human nature, to the neglect of the intellectual, his style is no more to be commended who ministers to the

intellectual, to the neglect of the emotional. Indeed, if a preacher cannot practise the "happy medium," which in this, as in all things, is so to be desired, then—far beneath its proper ideal as his preaching will, consequently, be—he had better confine his appeals chiefly to the heart. Because, despite the deadening effect upon sentiment of the ultra-civilisation of this nineteenth century, feeling is more general than thought, so that the preacher who addresses himself to the former is surer of awakening a response than he who addresses himself to the latter.

Besides, religion has chiefly to do with the life; and a man's life is influenced more by his heart than by his head.

PROCRASTINATION.

Procrastination breeds procrastination. The same principle, doubtless, applies to most of our habits, whether good or bad—the more we practise them the firmer their hold upon us. But the rule pertains in a special sense to the particular tendency under consideration.

" 'Tis madness to defer :
Next day the fatal precedent will plead ;
Thus on, till wisdom is pushed out of life."

If I put off, for no good reason, the performance to-day of a duty that may even not be, in itself, distasteful to me, the very fact of my having so acted makes it, for some reason or other, distasteful to me to-morrow. Not only does the general habit to postpone acquire by this circumstance a measure of renewed strength, but it is specially strengthened to postpone again this particular thing, so that I am much less likely to do it now than I was before. Frequently, of course, the latter result is attributable to the increased external difficulties which, through my not having executed at the proper time a given task, I have now to contend with, as the disease, which might easily have been checked once, becomes hard to cure by-and-by, or the conflagration, which a bucketful of water would have suppressed when it broke out, presently demands the energies of a dozen fire-engines. But the more frequent cause of this further weakness is *internal*, and mainly consists, probably, in the fact that the thought of something which one ought to have done, but has omitted to do, is painful, more or less, to the mind, which therefore seeks to eject, and often succeeds in ejecting, from itself the unwelcome subject, if it intrude, before any practical effect has been produced upon the moral sense.

THORNTON WELLS.

The Preacher's Finger-Post.

Subject: THE DEPARTURE OF FRIENDS.

"Son of man, behold, I take away from thee the desire of thine eyes with a stroke: yet neither shalt thou mourn nor weep, neither shall thy tears run down. Forbear to cry, make no mourning for the dead, bind the tire of thine head upon thee, and put on thy shoes upon thy feet, and cover not thy lips, and eat not the bread of men. So I spake unto the people in the morning; and at even my wife died: and I did in the morning as I was commanded."—Ezek. xxiv. 16—18.

Friend after friend departs. Who has not lost a friend? The tenderest ties that bind man to earth are breaking every day in all circles throughout the world. "With a stroke" Ezekiel was bereft of the partner of his sorrows and joys. The passage teaches three things in relation to this subject.

I. That the departure of dear friends by death is UNDER THE DIRECTION OF THE GREAT GOD. "Behold I take away." The secondary and proximate cause of death may be a cut, a blow, drowning, disease, or poison; albeit it is always under the superintendent agency of God. "Thou turnest man to destruction." "Thou changest his countenance." "Thou

takest away his breath." Death is not the result of accident, necessity, of any chemical or mechanical force, but of the will of God. This doctrine teaches three practical lessons.

First: That the grand aim of life *should be to please God*. Is it true that our time is in His hand, that our breath is with Him? Then should not our grand aim be to please Him in all things?

Secondly: That the grand aim in bereavement should be to *acquiesce in the will of God*. He who gave and sustained life has a right to take it away. "It is the Lord: let Him do what seemeth Him good." "The Lord gave," &c.

Thirdly: That our grand impression at every deathbed *should be that the Lord is at hand*. The writers of the Bible always speak of death in this way. They speak of it as the coming of the Lord, as the Judge standing at the door. In every funeral that darkens the street, in every open grave, at every deathbed, the Lord appears. He appears to speak with a moral thunder to the heart.

II. That the departure of dear friends by death is THE SOURCE OF GREAT SORROW.

This is implied in the command, "Yet neither shalt thou mourn nor weep, neither shall tears run down. Forbear to cry, make no mourning for the dead." The loss of a real friend is to the social heart what the amputation of a limb is to the body: great pain and great deprivation. Sorrow for the dead indicates several things.

First: Something *good* in human nature. It always springs out of love, and love is divine. Had we no love for our friends we should heave no sighs and rain no tears on their graves. Quench this day all the affection that man has for man, and henceforth there will be no mourning for the dead. Sorrow is the memory of widowed affection, and nothing but a draught of utter oblivion can lap it into insensibility. This social affection is good, it is the hope of the world. Let it ebb out and humanity is undone: a mind without love is already damned. Again, sorrow for the dead indicates—

Secondly: Something *wrong* in human nature. Why are the cords of friendship thus dissolved, why does that affection that is the glory of our being become our woe? Why is the sun of our nature turned into darkness, and its moon into blood? It cannot be according to the original plan of Divine benevolence. The

Bible gives the explanation. "As by one man sin entered into the world," &c. Man loves because he is human. man's love turns into agony because he is sinful. Again, this sorrow indicates—

Thirdly: Something *wanted* for human nature. What does man want to abate the sorrow? (1) An assurance of a happy future life. (2) A hope of a happy future reunion. Whence comes this assurance? Not from human speculation, philosophy, or religion, but from the Gospel. "I am the resurrection and the life," &c. "I go to prepare a place for you," &c.

III. That the departure of dear friends by death SHOULD NOT INTERFERE WITH MORAL DUTY. "And at even my wife died: and I did in the morning as I was commanded." Ezekiel was sent on a mission, and though his wife died in the evening he continued to pursue his mission the next day. One might have thought that the event would have authorised a pause in his career of duty; but no, his grief, though intense, was not to check him. The next day found him at his place, with no badge of mourning but the badge that nature gives, viz., the sad expression of a widowed heart. There are three reasons why we should attend to duty rather than indulge in sorrow.

First: Because indulgence

in sorrow *confers no benefit on others; the fulfilment of duty does.* Tears, and sighs, and groans can never heal a broken heart, or chase away the clouds of ignorance from mind.

Secondly: Because indulgence in sorrow *injures self, and the fulfilment of duty does good to self.* Sorrow injures the health, enfeebles the intellect, depresses the heart. Sorrow is like the midnight sky, under its influence all nature is depressed. The discharge of duty does us good. We grow morbid by grief, robust by work.

Thirdly: Because indulgence in sorrow *does not suspend the claims of duty.* Duty knows no pause. Whilst we are sorrowing her claims increase in number and urgency. Duty does not pause at our shrieks, accommodates not herself to our moods. Her commands are absolute, "Let the dead bury the dead."

Subject: THE SUPERIORITY OF MORAL TO MILITARY FORCE.

"The words of wise men are heard in quiet, more than the cry of him that ruleth among fools. Wisdom is better than weapons of war."—Eccles. ix. 17, 18.

"The words of wise men are heard in quiet:" words of thoughtfulness and conviction, silently dropping from the lips or the pen, are more mighty than the boisterous

bombastic utterances of those who rule by force. The superiority of moral over military force will appear by the following considerations:

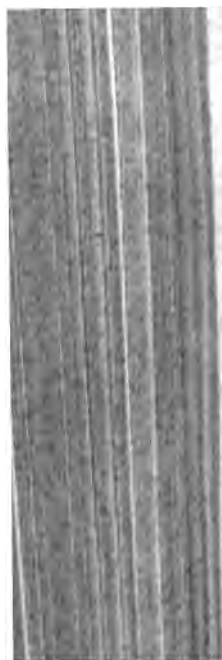
I. The one DEVELOPS THE HIGHEST ELEMENTS OF MIND AND CHARACTER, the other does not. In what does moral power consist?

First: In a *correct apprehension* of moral truth. What is moral truth? Truth referring to the foundation of duty, which is the existence of God; the standard of duty, which is the will of God; the inspiration of duty, which is the love of God.

Secondly: An *indomitable sympathy* with moral truth; such a sympathy as Job had when he said, "Though he slay me," &c. And as Paul, "I count not my life," &c.

Thirdly: A *practical embodiment* of moral truth. Moral truth only reaches its highest point of power when it is incarnated, worked out in all the activities of daily life. Herein then is *moral* power, and it involves the highest elements of mind and character. But what have you in military power? No deep moral conviction, no high sympathies, no divine aspirations; nothing but tact, cunning, expertness, brute courage, daring recklessness. Again—

II. The one AFFORDS FULL SCOPE FOR ALL THE BELLIGERENT INSTINCTS IN MAN,



rapacity, selfishness, and those invisible elements of evil that haunt the globe and fill every sphere of life. Man then, is made for battle. But military power cannot fight the true battle. Man cannot shoot moral errors with bayonets, cannot slay injustice with swords. Two things should be considered here:

First: *That military force can only bring man into contact with the mere forms of his enemies.* It does not touch the spirit of enmity; moral force does. The words of true moral power, heard in "quiet," smite dishonesties, enmities, falsehoods. It was said of Jesus, "He should slay His enemies with the words of His mouth."

Secondly: *That there are hosts of enemies that military force cannot meet at all.* What can military force do with

their existence nor their enmity.

IV. The one ACHIEVES ITS CONQUESTS WITHOUT INJURY TO SELF OR OBJECT, the other does not. The moral force employed in moral campaigns, either in self-defence or in conquest, does not injure, but blesses the fighter. By it he gets good, his energy is renewed by exercise. Nor are others injured; no wealth is sacrificed, no rights are outraged, no sufferings are produced. Nothing is destroyed but that which destroys the enemies, and by destroying the evil you save your very foe. But in military force all is ruined: commerce, governments, wealth, towns, cities, as well as millions upon millions of human life. Men say it is visionary to talk of moral power conquering enemies. Visionary! It has never been tried. If a thousandth part of the mind, genius, wealth, which military power has employed to put down enemies had been used in the employment of moral, men and nations, I trow, would be far less disposed to engage in bloody battle than they are now.

V. The one is SANCTIONED BY THE EXAMPLE OF CHRIST, the other is not. What is Christianity? The life of Christ. How did He act towards His enemies? When "He was reviled, He reviled not again." He prayed for

His enemies on the Cross: and after His death He sent messengers of mercy to them into the world.

From the subject learn, First: The *fearful moral ignorance of the world*. Everywhere man has more faith in military than in moral power. Kings, statesmen, priests, all have more faith in swords and bayonets than in moral truth.

Secondly: The *encouragement to use moral force in the correction of wrong*. "The words of wise men are heard in quiet more than the cry of him that ruleth among fools." Military power is the power of lightning which comes in thunder, that works mischief; moral power is the solar beam, it comes quietly, it streams serenely from the heavens, it penetrates the roots of life, and blesses all. The truly beneficent always works quietly.

Thirdly: *The men who are destined to become the heroes of the future*. The time hastens when the most illustrious conquerors of history will be hurled from their pedestals and regarded with execration and contempt. Moral conquerors are the men for the future!

"Our many deeds, the thoughts we have thought,
They go out from us thronging every hour,
And in them all is folded up a power
That on the earth doth move them to and fro,

And mighty are the marvels they
have wrought
In hearts we know not, and may
never know."—*E. H. Lohr.*

Subject: CHRIST BEFORE
HEROD.

"And when Herod saw Jesus, he was exceedingly glad: for he was desirous to see him of a long season, because he had heard many things of him; and he hoped to have seen some miracle done by him. Then he questioned with him in many words: but he answered him nothing. And the chief priests and scribes stood and vehemently accused him. And Herod with his men of war set him at naught, and mocked him, and arrayed him in a gorgeous robe, and sent him again to Pilate. And the same day Pilate and Herod were made friends together: for before they were at enmity between themselves."—*Luke xxiii. 8-12.*

Here we have three things worthy of notice.

I. A FALLACIOUS SOURCE OF GLADNESS. "Herod was exceedingly glad." What made him glad? The opportunity for ascertaining the real merits of the charges brought against Him, and for dealing with them accordingly? or for an opportunity of ascertaining from His own lips the ways of God? No.

First: He was glad *because he hoped an idle curiosity would be gratified.* "He had heard many things of Him." He expected that Jesus perhaps would entertain him as a mighty magician performing feats of wonder. He had heard a great deal of the

marvels He had wrought in various parts of the country: now he expected to be entertained with similar displays.

Secondly: He was glad, *whereas he ought to have been overwhelmed with sadness.* The sight of Christ might well have broken his heart, and filled him with the utmost anguish of soul. His visage was marred more than any man's. The Innocent Victim of calumny, insult, and cruelty. Oh, Herod! a flood of tears, a wail of agony, for the wickedness of thy country, would have been far more becoming for thee on this occasion than shouts of gladness! How often in all ages sinners rejoice where they ought to mourn! The joy of the sinner is the hilarity of the maniac.

II. TRUE DIGNITY REVEALED IN SILENCE. "He questioned with Him in many words, but He answered him nothing." There is a silence that is often more eloquent than speech, the silence of a man choked with a whelming tide of emotion. There was eloquence now in Christ's silence. Yes, and Divine dignity! The man who can stand and listen to the language of stolid ignorance, venomous bigotry and personal insult, addressed to him in an offensive spirit, and offer no reply, reflects a moral majesty before which antagonists must quail. Christ's

silence now was not the silence of *fear*, for He had courage enough to thunder: not the silence of *ignorance*, for His knowledge was infinite: not the silence of *policy*, but the silence of conscious rectitude and unbounded confidence in God.

III. THE INIQUITY OF PRIESTISM. "And the chief priests and scribes stood and vehemently accused Him." In their accusation there was (1) falsehood; (2) injustice; and (3) cruelty. Ecclesiastical authority is often impregnated and directed by the worst elements of evil.

IV. CONTEMPT OF TRUE GREATNESS. "And Herod with his men of war set Him at nought and mocked Him." Christ was the highest embodiment of true moral greatness. Worldly greatness is contemptible in the presence of that spiritual greatness which reflects the character of God, and that will grow brighter and brighter for ever. Herod and his wretched minions now mocked at this greatness. I presume that the derision was *affected*, for all souls are bound to respect the true in character. I defy the universe to despise love, truth, honesty, integrity. The ridicule of a monarch and his soldiers now was but a mask to conceal a quailing conscience. It was *pride* that prompted the base and cruel hypocrisy.

V. THE WORTHLESSNESS OF WORLDLY FRIENDSHIP. "And the same day Pilate and Herod were made friends together; for before they were at enmity between themselves." Friends, indeed! Their friendship was that of hell, where "devil with devil damned firm concord holds." Their friendship was merely a common sympathy with a common wrong.

Subject: THE MORALLY TRANSCENDENTAL.

"Wherein he hath made us accepted in the Beloved."—Eph. i. 6.

Elsewhere we have expounded not only this verse but the whole epistle. We take the words now in order to set forth three great subjects of thought.

I. THE HIGHEST OBJECT OF LOVE. "*The Beloved*." Or the Beloved One. Who is He? The Lord Jesus Christ spoken of in the preceding verses. There are millions of beloved ones in the universe, but He is *the* Beloved One.

First: He is beloved *by* the highest *intelligences*. Saints—angels—God. All true hearts meet in Him as rays in the sun.

Secondly: He is beloved in the highest *degree*. All who love Him give Him not a shallow sympathy, not a partial affection, but the profoundest love of their nature.

He is the "Well Beloved" of the Infinite.

II. THE SUBLIMEST STATE OF BEING. "*In the Beloved.*" What is it to be in Christ?

First: *To be in His heart.* Moral beings live in the hearts of each other. Parents live in the hearts of their children, children in the hearts of parents, friend in the heart of friend. The father separated a thousand leagues away from his children has them in him on the distant shores on which he toils for their livelihood. They walk the chambers of his memory, they appear before the eye of his imagination, they fire his blood, they stimulate his activities. All true men are thus in the heart of Christ.

Secondly: *To be in His character.* Man lives in the character of man. Children live in the character of their parents, the present generation lives in the character of the past. The characters of men of departed ages constitute the atmosphere in which the men of this age live, and move, and have their being. All unregenerate men live in the character of the first

Adam, all true souls live in the character of Christ. They incorporate His principles, they inbreathe His Spirit, they get fashioned by His will. What higher state of being is conceivable than to be in the heart and character of such a "Beloved One!"

III. THE HIGHEST SOURCE OF GOOD. "Wherein He hath made us accepted in the Beloved." The idea is that it is through the rich, the free and sovereign grace, spoken of in the preceding verses, which God bestows that men are truly blest. It is by God's free mercy that men are in the Beloved and blessed in the Beloved. God's free grace is the primal font of all human virtue and blessedness in this world.

"O God, how beautiful the thought,
How merciful the bless'd decree,
That grace can e'er be found
when sought,
And nought shut out the soul
from Thee.
The cell may cramp, the fetters
gall,
The flame may scorch, the
rack may tear,
But torture, stake, or prison
wall
Can be endured with faith and
prayer."—*Eliza Cook.*

Seeds of Sermons from the Minor Prophets.

If the Bible as a whole is inspired, it is of vast importance that all its Divine ideas should be brought to bear upon the living world of men. Though the pulpit is the organ Divinely intended for this work, it has been doing it hitherto in a miserably partial and restricted method. It selects isolated passages, and leaves whole chapters and books for the most part untouched. Its conduct to the Minor Prophets may be taken as a case in point. How seldom are they resorted to for texts, and yet they abound with splendid passages throbbing with Divine ideas. It is our purpose to go through this section of the Holy Word; selecting, however, only such verses in each chapter and book as seem the most suggestive of truths, of the most vital interest, and universal application.

We begin with HOSEA. The remembrance of some facts connected with this man will greatly help us in our endeavours to reach the meaning and feel the power of certain of his utterances. He was a native of Israel, and lived in Samaria about 700 or 800 years B.C. His prophecy seems to have embraced a period of about 60 years, from Jeroboam's death to Hezekiah's ascension to the throne. He was contemporary with Isaiah, and preceded Joel, Jonah, and Amos. His prophecies are directed almost exclusively to the ten tribes who had sunk into the deepest idolatry. His style, as a writer, is very peculiar. "It is," says De Witte, "abrupt, unrounded, and ebullient, his rhythm hard, leaping, and violent." Like a bee he has been said to fly from one flower to another, to suck the honey from all the blossoms.

HOSEA.

No. XXXIV.

*Subject: JUSTICE AND MERCY
IN THE HEART OF GOD.*

"How shall I give thee up, Ephraim! how shall I deliver thee, Israel! how shall I make thee as Admah! how shall I set thee as Zeboim! mine heart is turned within me, my repentings are kindled together. I will not execute the fierceness of mine anger, I will not return to destroy Ephraim: for I am God, and not man; the Holy One in the midst of thee: and I will not enter into the city." —Hosea xi. 8, 9.

The Bible is pre-eminently an anthropomorphic book, that is, a book revealing God, not directly in His absolute glory, nor through the affections, thoughts, and conduct

of angels, but through man—through man's emotions, modes of thought, and actions. It sometimes brings God before us in the character of a husband, that we may appreciate His fidelity and tenderness; sometimes in the character of a warrior, that we may appreciate His invincibility and the victories that attend His procedure; sometimes as a monarch, that we may appreciate His wealth, splendour, and authority; sometimes as a father, that we may appreciate the reality, depth, and solicitude of His love. It is in this last character, the character of a father, that these verses present Him to our notice. No human character, of course, can give a full or perfect revelation of Him—all fall infinitely short. The

brightest human representation of Him is to His glory less than the dimmest glow-worm to the central fires of the universe. And yet it is only through man that we can get any clear or impressive idea of Him. It is only through human love, human faithfulness, human justice, that we can gain any conception of the love, faithfulness, and justice of the Eternal. The verses lead us to consider several things.

I. Mercy and justice as COEXISTING in the heart of the Father. "How shall I give thee up, Ephraim? how shall I deliver thee, Israel? how shall I make thee as Admah? how shall I set thee as Zeboim?" To give up to ruin, to deliver to destruction, burn up, as Admah and Zeboim—cities of the plain—were burnt up, is the demand of *justice*. "Mine heart is turned within me, my repentings are kindled together." This is the voice of *mercy*. Here, then, in the heart of this great Father is justice and mercy. What is justice? It is that sentiment that demands that every one should have his due, that virtue should be rewarded, that vice should be punished. What is mercy? A disposition to overlook injuries and to treat beings better than they deserve. These two must never be regarded as elements *essentially* distinct; they are branches from the same root, streams from the same fountain. Both are but modifications of love. Justice is but love standing up sternly against the wrong, mercy is but love bending in tenderness over the helpless and the suffering. Now in the heart of God this

love assumes these two phases or manifestations. (1) *Material nature* shows that there is the stern and the mild in God. Winter reveals His sternness, summer His amiability and kindness. (2) *Providence* shows that there is the stern and the mild in God. The heavy afflictions that befall nations, families, and individuals, reveal His sternness; the health and the joy that gladden life reveal His mercy. (3) *The spiritual constitution of man* shows that there is the stern and the mild in God. In the human soul there is an instinct to revenge the wrong, often stern, inexorable, and heartless. There is also an instinct of tenderness and compassion. Whence came these? From the great Father. In God, then, there is justice and mercy. The verses lead us to consider—

II. Mercy and justice as EXCITED BY MAN in the heart of the Father. (1) *The moral wickedness of Ephraim* evoked His *justice*. Ephraim, unfaithful, sensual, false, idolatrous, justly deserved punishment. Justice awoke, demands destruction; it says, "Let Ephraim be given up, make no more efforts for its restoration and happiness; let it be delivered into the hand of the enemy, let it be torn to pieces. Rain fire from heaven upon it, and let it burn to ashes, as did Admah and Zeboim." Human wickedness is always stirring, so to say, the justice of the Infinite heart. (2) *The filial suffering of Ephraim* evoked His *mercy*. Elsewhere (Jer. xxxi. 20) we have these remarkable words: "Is Ephraim my dear son?"

is he a pleasant child? for since I spake against him, I do earnestly remember him still: therefore my bowels are troubled for him; I will surely have mercy upon him, saith the Lord." God calls Ephraim His son, and Ephraim was in suffering, and hence His compassion was turned. Why does the Eternal Father show mercy unto mankind? They deserve destruction on account of their sins, but men are His children, and His children in suffering. The verses lead us to consider—

III. Mercy **STRUGGLING** AGAINST justice in the heart of the Great Father. There is a father who has a son not only disobedient, but unloving and malignantly hostile; he spurns his father's authority, and pursues a course of conduct antagonistic to his father's will and interests. Often has the father reproved him with love, and entreated him to reform, but he has grown worse and worse, and has become incorrigible. The wickedness of the son rouses the sentiment of justice in the heart of the father, and the father says: "I will give you up, I will shut my door against you, I will disown you, and send you as a vagabond on the world: never more shall you cross the threshold of my home, never more will I speak to you." This is justice; but then the thought that he is his son rouses the other sentiment, love, and here is the struggle: "How shall I give thee up?" Such experience as this is, alas! too common in human life. Such a struggle between mercy and justice is going on in the heart of many a father in London to-

night. The passage gives us to understand, there is something like this in the heart of the Infinite Father. "Justice crying out "damn," mercy crying out "save!" This is wonderful. I cannot understand it; it transcends my conception; and yet this passage suggests the fact. The verse leads us to consider—

IV. Mercy **TRIUMPHING** OVER justice in the heart of the Great Father. "Mine heart is turned within me, my repentings are kindled together. I will not execute the fierceness of mine anger, I will not return to destroy Ephraim." (1) Mercy has triumphed over justice in the *perpetuation of the race*. Justice said: "In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." Adam did eat of the fruit, but lived and became the father of a countless and ever multiplying race. Why? Mercy triumphed. (2) Mercy has triumphed over justice in the *experience of every living man*. Every man is a sinner, and his sins cry out for destruction; and he lives on because mercy has triumphed. (3) Mercy has triumphed over justice in the *redemptive mission of Christ*. In relation to the whole family tree, justice said, "Cut it down, for it cumbereth the ground;" but mercy interposed and said, "Spare it a little longer."

How comes it to pass that mercy thus triumphs? Here is the answer. "For I am God, and not man." Had I been a man it would have been otherwise. "My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord."

No. XXXV.

Subject: THE LIES OF A PEOPLE.

"Ephraim compasseth me about with lies, and the house of Israel with deceit."—Hosea xi. 12.

The Almighty here represents Himself as a man beset with lies on every hand, as if He could not move either one way or the other. Let us notice—

I. The NATURE of the lies of a nation. Lies are as abundant in England to-day as they were in Ephraim centuries ago. The social atmosphere is infested with falsehoods.

First: There are *commercial* lies. From the largest warehouse to the pedlar's paltry stall lies abound. They infest the commercial world more densely far than insects the summer air. Secondly: There are *theological* lies. Doctrines are propounded and enforced from the press and theological chairs, utterly untrue to eternal realities. Thirdly: There are *religious* lies. Sentiments and aspirations are expressed in the prayers, psalmodes, and liturgies of congregations, untrue to facts, untrue to the experience of those who give them utterance. Fourthly: There are *literary* lies. The journals and volumes that stream from the modern press teem with falsehood. Surely if the Almighty were to speak of England as He spoke of Ephraim in olden times, He would say it "compasseth me about with lies."

"How false are men, both in their heads and hearts:

And there is falsehood in all trades and arts.

Lawyers deceive their clients by false law:

Priests, by false gods, keep all the world in awe.

For their false tongues such flattery-
ring knaves are rais'd,

For their false wit scribbles by
fools are prais'd."

—*John Crown.*

Notice—

II. The CAUSE of the lies of a nation. All lies spring from at least three sources.

(1) *Vanity*. A desire to appear before our compeers in the world greater than we are, leads to the exaggeration of our virtues, if we have any, and to the denial of our infirmities and faults. (2) *Greed*. Greed is a prolific source of falsehood. Greed creates the lies that crowd our markets. (3) *Fear*. Fear creates lies as shields of defence. Religious lies spring in a great measure from fear. Nearly all the lies that fill the world are the children either of vanity, greed, or fear.

III. The EVIL of the lies of a nation. All lies are bad things.

(1) They are bad in *themselves*. They are repugnant to the God of truth. They are a miasma in the moral atmosphere, essentially offensive as well as pernicious. (2) They are bad in their *influence*. Lies deceive and ruin. Every system built on lies, commercial, scientific, political, and religious, is like a house built on the sand that must tumble down before the rushing storms of reality.

"Let falsehood be a stranger to thy lips:

Shame on the policy that first began

To tamper with the heart to hide
its thoughts!

And doubly shame on that inglorious tongue
That sold its honesty and told a lie.—*William Havard.*

No. XXXVI.

Subject: WORTHLESS SOUL FOOD.

"Ephraim feedeth on wind."—*Hosea xii. 1.*

Delitzsch renders this clause, "Ephraim grazeth wind." The idea is that it sought for support and satisfaction in those things that were utterly unsubstantial and worthless—"wind."

I. SENSUAL INDULGENCES are worthless soul food. Men seek happiness in the gratification of their senses, in the free indulgence of their appetites: but all this is nothing but "wind," it leaves the soul more hungry than ever. Souls die with hunger in the pampered body of the gourmand and voluptuary. "Man cannot live by bread alone," &c.

II. WORLDLY DISTINCTIONS

are worthless soul food. Thousands seek food for their souls in worldly titles, honour, and fame. But these are "wind." The souls of our grandes are perishing with hunger. Walk Rotten Row in the height of the season, and in the countenances of hundreds of those rolling in the stream of dazzling chariots you see moral hunger depicted. What are they doing? They are *grazing* wind.

III. RELIGIOUS FORMALITIES are worthless soul food. Millions go through religious formalities in search of spirit food. They crowd temples, synagogues, cathedrals, churches, chapels, rigorously attend to the mere ceremonies of religion, and return from their devotions with hungry and unfed souls. At the altars they have been *grazing* wind. "Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread? and your labour for that which satisfieth not?" hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness."

The Pulpit and its Handmaids.

ORIGINAL SIMILITUDES.

SIN.—This is too ubiquitous a presence, too operative a force amongst us, either to deny or ignore. It is a dark cloud on our sky, it begloms our path, it chills every breeze of life."

RETICENCE.—"The superficial are talkative; the profound are taciturn. The fluent in speech is ever the shallow in thought. Great knowledge is always reticent."

FIRST IDEAS.—"Our first ideas root themselves in our being, and become the germs of future conduct. A bad creed must lead to a vicious life. Hence the importance of sound doctrine."

FORGIVENESS.—"See that dark mass of cloud up yonder, how it hides the sun and chills the air. A breeze has sprung up, and it is gone: the sky is azure, the scene is bright, and the flowing air warm with life. That cloud shall never come again, no more shall thy sins. It is as the throwing of them behind God. 'Thou hast cast all my sins behind Thy back.'"

INDIGNATION.—"The stronger a being's love for the right, the mightier his indignation for the wrong."

SINS.—"The great stone-book of nature reveals many strange records of the past. In the red sandstone there are found in some places marks which are clearly the impressions of showers of rain, and these so perfect that it can even be determined in which direction the shower inclined, and from what quarter it proceeded; and this ages ago! So sin leaves its track behind it, and God keeps a faithful record of all our sins."

LIFE.—"As the oak moves from century to century from the acorn to a point when its perfection is reached and decadence begins, all animal life passes from the embryo to an organisation worn out with years."

RETRIBUTION.—"Retributive justice, which is a mere star in

our earthly sphere, will grow into a sun, which shall flood with overwhelming brightness our eternity. 'Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.'"

IMITATION OF GOD.—"We cannot become like God in wisdom, power, sovereignty; but we can in love. The child can love as well as the man, and the man as well as the seraph. The God of love hath made all souls to love. God must be imitated in this respect. It is essential to happiness. Heaven is in this love, and nowhere else. 'He that loveth dwelleth in God, and God in him.'"

THE ADVANTAGE OF GIVING.—"Wealth tends to materialise the soul. Every contribution to spiritual objects counteracts the tendency. It is another step up the ladder, whose foot is deep down in materialism, but whose top reaches to the holy heavens of spirit and love."

WHERE SHALL WISDOM BE FOUND?—"Truth from God may be found written in the volume of nature, written in the facts of human history, written in the constitution of the human soul; but the truth from God which man wants as a sinner is to be found in the book which we call with emphasis, the Bible. It must be sought for in these documents; it is here under the cover of facts and histories, metaphors and poetry; here in Christ."

TRUTH.—"Truth, as ideas in the mind, is only like floating clouds, rolling undischarged

over the barren soil ; but truth, as deeds, is like living streams, so intersecting each other, and winding in every direction, as to touch the whole region into life, verdure, and beauty."

REVENGE. — "'Revenge is sweet,' it is said ; but if there is a gratification in it, it is only momentary. When the final stroke has been given, the season of reflection sets in, and conscience comes up and makes the avenger its own victim."

NATURE A PREACHER. — "Nature as a preacher continues its eloquent discourse from age to age, and its aim in all is to draw the mind of man from the visible to the invisible, from the material to the spiritual, from itself to universal being."

FALSE HOPES. — "False hopes are like meteors that brighten the skies of the soul for a moment, only to leave the gloom more intense and crushing."

"HOPE is that which gives sunshine to the sky, beauty to the landscape, and music to the sounds of life."

SELFISHNESS. — "Selfishness everywhere is bad ; it is the taproot of all wickedness, it is the stronghold of the devil, it is the chief of all the principalities and powers of darkness."

NATURE A PARABLE. — "The material world is not only the creature and organ of the spiritual, but its emblematic representation. As the tabernacle of old was made after the 'pattern of things seen on the mount,' so all the objects of

the visible universe are moulded according to those eternal principles that pervade the spiritual domain."

TRUTH SEED. — "The gospel is like seed-corn in many respects. It is perfect in itself ; so perfect is it that to attempt to add to it, or take from it, would be to injure it. Winnow it, if you like ; take off its husks, and give the chaff to the wind, but you must not touch the germ. It is so with the 'truth as it is in Jesus.' There are seeds whose downy wings convey them to spots where they plant themselves. They require no hand either to bear them or prepare their bed. Not so with corn-grain ; if it is to grow and flourish it must be properly sown. So with Divine truth. Errors, like winged seeds, float thickly on the moral atmosphere of the world, and will plant themselves, will grow without culture in human souls, and yield a fruitful crop. But truths will not ; they must be sown."

SOUL-CULTURE. — "Under God thou canst turn the wilderness into a paradise ; thou canst plant trees within thee that will cluster with immortal fruit, open rivers that will roll with waves of life, and surround thyself with an atmosphere that shall be luminous with the light, fragrant with the aroma, and vocal with the music of the heavenly world."

THE GOSPEL. — "The gospel is as independent of our theology as the stellar universe is independent of astronomic theories."

Homiletical Brebiaries.

No. LXXXVII.

Subject: PERSONAL GOODNESS.

"Be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear."—1 Peter iii. 15.

The words suggest four things in relation to religion. First: ITS PROSPECTIVENESS. It is a "hope." Personal religion is a great hope in a man. This hope implies two things: a *desire* for future good. What is the good desired? Not mere *happiness*, this would be selfish, but *moral excellence*, assimilation to God. It implies, secondly, an *expectation* of future good. Hope is compounded of desire and expectation; we desire many things we cannot hope for, and we expect many things we cannot desire. Hope is an expectation of the desirable. All expectation implies reason or ground. Secondly: ITS SOCIALITY. Here is asking questions and answering them. Genuine religion is pre-eminently social. It excludes the anti-social and dis-socialising element—*selfishness*. It is social. (1) It has a community of paramount interest. All religious souls have the same imperial concerns. (2) A community of leading aims. One grand purpose runs through all godly hearts. Hence all meet on common ground. Thirdly: ITS REASONABLENESS. "Give a reason for the hope." Every godly man can give a reason for this hope. It does not require erudition or talent to enable him to do so. Ask him why does he hope to become good, and he could give such answers as these: (1) Because my nature was made for goodness; (2) Because Christ came into the world to give me goodness; (3) Because God works to make me good; (4) Because the great struggle of my nature is to be good. These are good reasons, are they not? Fourthly: ITS REVERENCE. "With meekness and fear." Genuine religion is foreign to all that is arrogant, blatant, and pretentious. It is modest, devout, and meek. It is meek and lowly in spirit.

No. LXXXVIII.

Subject: THE INDISSOLUBLE BOND.

"Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?"—Rom. viii. 35.

Who? No one who cannot do one of three things. First: **ANNIHILATE THE LOVED ONES.** The being who could blot out of existence those whom Christ loved might effect the object, but who could do this? No creature in the heavens or on the earth. No one but the **ABSOLUTE.** Secondly: **BLOT THE LOVED ONES FROM THE MEMORY OF THE LOVER.** The being who could cause Christ to forget His disciples would succeed. For those whom we cease to remember we cease to love. But who can do this? He is omniscient, the past, present, and the future are all alike to Him. Duration is all a NOW to Him. He is "the same yesterday," &c. Thirdly: **GIVE NEW INFORMATION OF THE LOVED ONES TO THE LOVER.** Were it possible for a being to inform Christ of some bad qualities and some enormous crimes connected with the loved ones of which He was ignorant, His love might be extinguished. But who could do this? No one in heaven or on earth. He knew from eternity all concerning the objects of His love.

No. LXXXIX.

Subject: THE DIVINE LAMP.

"Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path."—Psalm cxix. 105.

God's word as a lamp is—First: **EVER NEEDFUL.** Man needs a guide through life. His mental eyes are dim, and the road is drear, intricate, and dark. It is labyrinthian. Secondly: **ALWAYS AVAILABLE.** It suits every path in life. The path of the young and aged, the celibate and the married, the rich and the poor, the merchant, statesman, and philosopher, &c. Thirdly: **ALL-SUFFICIENT.** It throws light on every conceivable step in life, and the light is clear and sufficient. None need stumble anywhere who hold it before them. Fourthly: **IT IS INEXTINGUISHABLE.** It burns as brightly in the hands of the youngest disciple to-day as it did in the hands of the old patriarchs. It is a quenchless light. The advancing intelligence of humanity will never supersede its necessity or dim its lustre.

No. XC.

Subject: "MAN MADE DIVINE."

"I will put my spirit within you."—Ezek. xxxvi. 27.

First: GOD'S GREATEST WORK WITH MAN. What is this? To *put His spirit into him*. That is, to put into the human soul His own ideas, disposition, and aims. To inspire humanity with His loves and purposes. It is the greatest work (1) because it is the most difficult. In this He has to work against man's prejudices, habits, and rebellious will. It is the greatest because (2) it has cost Him most. He gave His only-begotten Son, the Bible, and holy ministers. It is the greatest (3) because it is the most glorious. The revelation of God in the human soul is far more glorious than His revelation in sun, moon, or stars. Secondly: MAN'S GREATEST GIFT FROM GOD. What is that? His spirit put into him. His spirit (1) makes man independent of the world, and enables him to control circumstances, to put the world under his feet, even to "glory in tribulation;" (2) makes man divine. Man, when this spirit is in him, becomes the residence, the organ, and the revealer of the divine—of God Himself.

No. XCI.

Subject: VITAL SUBJECTS.

"What shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God?"—1 Peter iv. 17.

Three subjects for thought here. First: A GLORIOUS SYSTEM, "the gospel." Etymologically the gospel means a good story, or good news. The value of this gospel is seen by three facts. First: *It is the highest revelation of God*. The highest revelation of God is not the revelation of His physical attributes, but the revelation of *His affection, His conscience, His heart*. The gospel is this. Secondly: *It is the best revelation of man*. No philosophy gives such a revelation of man. It reveals his origin, constitution, condition, obligation, and destiny. Thirdly: *It is the only revelation of the way in which a friendship can be established between God and man*. There is a moral distance between the two: the gospel alone spans the gulf. Secondly: AN ENORMOUS CRIME IN NOT OBEYING THE GOSPEL. This supposes (1) an acquaintance with the gospel. Who can obey a law of which he knows nothing?

The heathen are guiltless here. (2) It supposes that obedience is the end of the gospel. The gospel is not a system for speculation or discussion, a mere thing for thought or talk; but a thing for *action*, a law to be *obeyed*. Its doctrines must be translated into deeds, its words must become flesh. Another point is, that the non-obeying of this gospel is a great crime. In truth, it is the greatest crime of which we can form any conception: it is a sin against Infinite Love. Not obeying is a sin. Negation is a crime. Thirdly: AN UNANSWERABLE QUESTION. "What shall the end be?" Peter does not answer this question, nor do the Scriptures fully, hence the endless theological speculations and dogmas on the point. (1) Some say *annihilation*. This seems to me unscientific, contrary to analogy, and derogatory to the Divine character. (2) Some say *ultimate restoration*. This my heart craves for. This I would willingly believe, for this I would search for more evidence. (3) Some say *eternal torment*. Some revel in the thought of eternal burning, and fight for the dogma as one of the fundamental elements of God's good news. But "what shall the end be"? Who knows? None but God. The mystery is awful: sufficiently awful to strike the deepest horror into the hearts of those who hear the gospel and obey it not. The question is, in fact, an "outer darkness" my imagination cannot brighten, a "bottomless pit" my intellect cannot fathom.

No. XCII.

Subject: GREAT MOTIVES MAKE SMALLEST ACTS GREAT.

"For whosoever shall give you a cup of water to drink in my name, because ye belong to Christ, verily I say unto you, he shall not lose his reward."—Mark ix. 41.

Here is, First, THE SIMPLEST ACT. Giving a cup of water. Generally water is common enough; in the East it is sometimes scarce, but it may be found everywhere. Thales regarded it as so ubiquitous, that he taught it was the origin of things. There was plenty of water in Jerusalem and Judea. Wells, brooks, rivers, and seas were at hand. What then could be a simpler act than to give a cup of cold water? Here is, Secondly: The simplest act INSPIRED WITH THE GREATEST MOTIVE. My name's sake, which condensely means, doing it in my spirit,—the spirit of disinterested self-sacrificing, and compassionate love. What makes a great act? Not the *form*. The rescuing of an empire from the grasp of an

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1. SELECTIONS FROM THE I
Memoir by her Sister. 2.
COMPANIONS OF THE LORD
SPARROWS, AND WHO FEI
FUL WORKS OF CHRIST.
HELEN'S VICTORY. London:

HERE is a batch of works
whole we think them scarcely
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The first, the *Memoir and*

Lyrics of Ancient Palestine contains a number of poems by a variety of authors on subjects connected with the Holy Land. Many of the subjects of these poems are beautifully illustrated with exquisite engravings. The whole is printed in fine type on toned paper, and handsomely bound with gilt edges. The "get up" is all that could be desired.

The Companions of the Lord. The subjects of this volume are "The probable motives of our Lord in choosing apostles, The men of His choice, General history and characteristics of the twelve, The Peter of the Gospels—to the triumphal entry, The Peter of the Gospels—from the entry to the Ascension, The Peter of the early Church, Andrew, James the son of Zebedee, The John of the Gospels, The John of the early Church, Philip, Nathanael or Bartholomew, Matthew, Thomas, James the son of Alphaeus, Judas and Simon the zealot, Judas Iscariot to the compact with the priests, Judas Iscariot after the compact." Although the ground over which the author has gone has been travelled many times by able men, he has found much in his path worth recording. The articles are thoughtful, and written in a style clear, unpretentious, and forceful.

City Sparrows. This is a charming little work, and well suited to interest and benefit children.

Wonderful Works of Christ. This treats, in a manner suited for children, on some of the miracles of Christ. It is a capital little book for the young.

Helcn's Victory. Another tale for children.

THE CONSERVATION OF MORAL FORCE. A Sermon by REV. H. GRIFFITH, of Bowdon. London: Arthur Hall, 25, Paternoster Row.

This is not a sermon in the popular sense of the word, although it has a text, one or two divisions, and a practical conclusion, containing a somewhat terrific appeal. Its scientific spirit, its philosophic method, and general style of thought, seem to exclude it from the category of conventional sermons. It is evidently the product of a man of rare ability, great culture, and affluent thought. The following paragraph taken from the introduction will enable our readers to understand its style. The text is, "That which hath been is now; and that which is to be hath already been; and God requireth that which is past."

"The ground thought of the whole is simply an extension to morals of the modern doctrine of the *conservation and correlation of forces*. Be the starting impulse what it may, in choosing a course we virtually determine the end. Nature knows nothing of violent breaks. To-day, as the child of yesterday, will be father of to-morrow. It is a link at each extreme, fastened to others homogeneous with itself, stretching into

regions where Omniscience alone can follow them. There is no discharge in that war, no solution of continuity. That which hath been, still is, and ever must be. God requires the whole of it, and will see to its infallible preservation. The doings of the Almighty are never to be undone. No word of His shall ever return unto Him void, no efflux of His power ever become fruitless. As the adorable *I am*, with Whom is no variability, neither "shadow of turning," He is, by necessity of nature, infinitely above all time limitations whatever. To Him, *past* and *future* are alike impossible. They are simply conditions of our own modes of thinking, as essentially inapplicable to the self-existent Jehovah as is the notion of nearness or distance. His present is not a transition, but a rest point : not a constituent of the ages, but their sum total : not part of a line being, but, as the schoolmen say, "its entire sphere : " an eternal now, carrying in it, as effect, all that has gone before, and, as cause, all that is ever to come after."

ESSAYS. By JOHN FOSTER. The Religious Tract Society.

We are glad to see this edition of Foster's Essays. Our space will not permit of our making the observations we should like to do ; the name of Foster is beloved by all great minds. Here we have the following essays : On a Man's writing Memoirs of Himself :—Decision of Character—The Application of the Epithet "Romantic"—The Aversion of Men of Taste to Evangelical Religion ; with the Introductory Essay to Doddridge's "Rise and Progress of Religion in the Soul." We shall give one extract from the essay on Decision of Character :—

"A man without decision can never be said to belong to himself ; since, if he dared to assert that he did, the puny force of some cause, about as powerful, you would have supposed, as a spider, may make a seizure of the hapless boaster the very next moment, and contemptuously exhibit the futility of the determinations by which he was to have proved the independence of his understanding and his will. He belongs to whatever can make capture of him ; and one thing after another indicates its right to him, by arresting him while he is trying to go on, as twigs and chips, floating near the edge of a river, are intercepted by every weed, and whirled in every eddy. Having concluded on a design, he may pledge himself to accomplish it, if the hundred diversities of feelings which may come within the week will let him. His character precluding all foresight of his conduct, he may sit and wonder what form and direction his views and actions are destined to take to-morrow ; as a farmer has often to acknowledge that next day's proceedings are at the disposal of its winds and clouds."

This is a book calculated to do a great deal of good, especially to young men. May it have a large circulation.



The Wear, Tear, and Dissolution of the World.

“And surely the mountain falling cometh to nought, and the rock is removed out of his place. The waters wear the stones; thou wastest away the things which grow out of the dust of the earth; and thou destroyest the hope of man. Thou prevailest for ever against him; and he passeth; thou changest his countenance, and sendest him away.”*—Job xiv. 18—20.

ANOTHER year has nearly run out; a few grains more have to fall, and its glass will be empty. It has reached its dying stage: a few more struggling throes and its knell will toll sadly on the ear of living men. Time is a wonderful preacher, and every year it closes one homily, only to begin another. Now in whispers, now in thunders, never ceasing—it proclaims to mortals, from generation to generation, the same great truths.

One of its grand and leading themes is that which Job points to in the text—*the wear, tear, and dissolution of the world*. Deeply was the patriarch of Uz impressed with this. He saw the law of decay working everywhere. He marked it in the *inorganic* realm. “The mountain falling

* As expository remarks on this passage will be found in the forthcoming number of the “Homilist,” they are omitted here.

cometh to nought, and the rock is removed out of his place." By the continual operation of natural bodies on each other the hardy substances get worn away by attrition. "*Gutta cavat lapidem.*" Since the Creator rounded this earth, and sent it wheeling through space, how many Alpine hills has Time removed! As large men shrink into dwarf proportions under the weight of years, hugest mountains get smaller and smaller, as ages beat them with their billows—"the waters wear the stones." He saw it in the *rital* realm. "Thou wastest away the things which grow out of the dust of the earth." What "things" have "grown out of the dust of the earth"—what herbs, flowers, orchards, forests. What sentient existences too; for all animal as well as vegetable life—the fowls of heaven, the fish of the sea, the cattle upon a thousand hills—have come out of the "dust of the earth." And these, too, are subject to the law of wear, tear, and dissolution. "Thou wastest away the things which grow out of the dust of the earth." Blooming landscapes come and go, mighty forests rise and fall, generations of animals succeed one another like waves that break upon the shore.

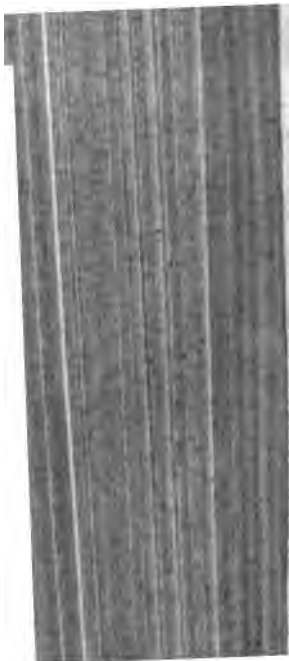
But it is to this law of wear, tear, and dissolution in the *human realm* that the text most especially points, and that is the most solemn and startling to us. "Thou destroyest the hope of man, thou prevaillest for ever against him: thou changest his countenance, and sendest him away." He seems to have been impressed with this law as it acted in the two great departments of life—the mental and the corporeal.

First: *The mental.* "Thou destroyest the hope of man." Though the patriarch might mean here by "hope," the hope of a life beyond the grave, or the hope of ever reappearing again on the earth after he had quitted it, his words bear a far wider application. Generally, what is the "hope of man"? For the most part it is that

which has animated him in all his operations and achievements; it is the spring of all his labours, whether they be literary or scientific, commercial, political, or ecclesiastic. In truth, all the productions of man, that have ever existed or that now exist, were once a human "Hope." It is hope that has built the cities, cathedrals, the temples, palaces, governments, and kingdoms of the world. All human institutions, intellectual systems, and arts, are the creations of Hope. Hope evoked the purpose, stirred the inventive thoughts, and marshalled the executive forces.

"Hope leads the child to plant the flower,
The man to sow the seed;
Nor leaves fulfilment to her hour,
But prompts again to deed."

Now, time wears out and destroys all this "Hope." As the mountains fall and come to nought, and rocks are removed out of their place and waters wear away the stone, so time works ruin amongst all human productions. Many great cities it has buried in the dust, and it is sapping the foundations of all that are now flourishing upon the earth. It has shattered kingdoms, and swept dynasties, which once stood as mountains, from the face of the earth; it has worn out many a religion, and blown away as gorgeous clouds great systems of thought, that once attracted the attention of the greatest thinkers of the world. This hand of decay is as active and ubiquitous to-day as ever: its grim fingers are on everything that is human, and everything human is shrivelling beneath its touch. Thrones are mouldering, kingdoms are dissolving, the world's greatest institutions are wearing out. The time will come when Rome, Venice, Berlin, Paris, St. Petersburg, London, New York, will be as mountains that have come to "nought," as rocks that have been removed out of their place.



He saw this law a
of life, viz. :—

Secondly : *The cor*
against him, and he pe
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against him." Truly.
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passeth," and no one se
his countenance." Th
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dissolution in the bodie
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His breasts are full of

"Homilist," and all hearty co-operators with me in that huge journalistic enterprise in which I, with the ardour of an enthusiast, embarked a few years ago. Love bids me halt in my train of thought and here inscribe their names with a word or two in honour of their memory. The first name I mention is that of Rev. William Wheeler, who for many years was the able Independent minister at Stroud. He was a man of most genial temperament, of sportive imagination, shrewd intellect, refined tastes, and rich culture. As a Greek scholar he had but few equals. Gratefully do I remember with what cordiality he received me when I visited Stroud some years ago, and the happy hours I spent with him at the house of Mr. Winterbottom the banker, a true man who has also entered into his rest.

The next name I mention is that of Rev. W. Webster, M.A., late Fellow of Queen's College, Cambridge, author of the "Syntax and Synonyms of the English Language," joint editor of the famous Greek Testament. Many years did I sit with him on the National Newspaper League Board. He was a man characterised by great humility of mind, most confiding disposition, thoroughly genial and generous, and withal possessing a scholarship not excelled by any in the kingdom. Had all my fellow-Directors been as honest and unselfish as he, England would have had to-day an influential daily journal that would have treated all questions, social, political, and religious, in the clear light of that golden law, "Do unto others as you would have others do unto you." Such a journal is, alas! still needed: and the old plan, if taken up by honest and competent men, would assuredly be sufficient to create and sustain it.

Another name I mention is that of Rev. Charles Wills, M.A., Incumbent of Ventnor Parish Church. I knew him well for many years. We were on most intimate terms,

and our intercourse frequent. He was a man of strong intellect, generous impulses, with a rich layer of humour running through his nature;—a man of varied and extensive reading, and eminent scholarly attainments. For years he was a regular contributor to the "*Homilist*." His articles entitled "*The Stars of Christendom*" will always be read with interest.

The next name I mention is Rev. David Evans, the Baptist minister of Newport, Monmouthshire. Only a few months ago I preached his anniversary sermons, and he occupied my pulpit. He was in the zenith of life when he died: a man of strong intellect, affluent nature, and a most effective preacher. And the last, of whose decease I have just heard, Rev. Thomas Davis, of Llandilo, was one of the noblest men and greatest preachers in Wales.

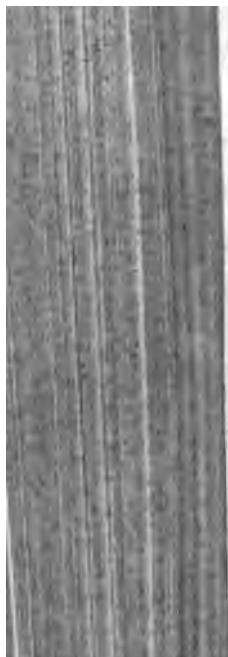
Many others whom I have known and loved have also gone this year. I mention these because they were not only great men and true friends, but co-workers. Peace to their ashes, celestial bliss to their spirits, comfort and prosperity to their surviving friends! Oh, death, while I feel thy ruthless cruelty in rifling me of such friends as these, I know that at thy grim behest I too must pass away.

"What's the grandeur of the earth
To the grandeur round Thy throne?
Riches, glory, beauty, birth,
To Thy kingdom all have gone.
Before Thee stand the wondrous band:
Bards, heroes, sages, side by side,
Who darkened nations when they died.

"Earth has hosts, but Thou canst show
Many a million for her one.
Through the gates the mortal flow
Hath for countless years rolled on.
Back from the tomb no step has come,
There fixed till the last thunder's sound
Shall bid Thy prisoners be unbound."—*Crowley*.

CONCLUSION.—This subject teaches—

First: The *unwisdom of worldliness*. What do I mean by worldliness? In other words, who is the worldly man? Not the man who takes a passing interest in the secular questions of the day. There is no harm in this—nay, it is duty. Current occurrences are Divine dispensations in human life. They have a voice that should be heard, a significance that should be studied. Their records are our Books of Chronicles, chronicles of kings and peoples, as they are now on the earth. Not the man who pursues his secular calling. Human labour is the Divine condition of human livelihood. He that works not should not eat,—this is a law settled in heaven; diligence in the pursuit of our worldly calling is a Divine obligation. Not the man who is charmed with the beauties and sublimities of the material world, and gives himself to the study of its constitution and laws; to study nature rightly is to study God. But by a worldly man, I mean the man whose spirit is dominated by greed and ambition, whose inspiration is filthy lucre and worldly pride: the man whose interests, pleasures, and dignities are all of the earth earthy; the man to whom the present life is everything, the life to come a blank; the man the grand question of whose daily life is not, “Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?” but, “What shall I eat, what shall I drink, wherewithal shall I be clothed?” Such a man as this is to the last degree unwise. Worldliness is egregious folly. Folly, because all it gets satisfies not, but leaves the soul empty and gnawing. Folly, because what it gets is very transitory. All beneath the sun is wearing out, the mountains are falling, the rocks are being removed, the stones are being washed away, the things that grow out of the earth are dying, the hopes of man are being destroyed, the whole generation of men are passing away as shadows under the sun. It is said that



The wormwood signifies that
are sweet in execution, but
consider what lesson of care
teaches—

Secondly: *The value of*
end of us? Is man nothing
and subject to the universe
tear, and dissolution? I
mighty billows of destiny,
out of the dust of the earth
him that this law cannot
above it, and will survive
crash of worlds? "If a
"O God, wilt Thou show
the dead arise and praise
can answer these questions
of philosophers ancient or
have given or can give
God, the New Testament
earthly house of this tabernacle
building of God a house

Homiletic Sketches on the Book of Job.

The Book of Job is one of the grandest sections of Divine Scripture. It has never yet, to our knowledge, been treated in a purely Homiletic method for Homiletic ends. Besides many learned expositions on the book found in our general commentaries, we have special exegetical volumes of good scholarly and critical worth; such as Drs. Barnes, Wemyss, Mason Goode, Noyes Lee, Delitzsch, and Herman Hedwick Bernard: the last is in every way a masterly production. For us, therefore, to go into philology and verbal criticism, when such admirable works are available to all students, would be superfluous, if not presumption. Ambiguous terms, when they occur, we shall of course explain, and occasionally suggest an improved rendering: but our work will be chiefly, if not entirely, Homiletic. We shall essay to bring out from the grand old words those Divine verities which are true and vital to man as man in all lands and ages. These truths we shall frame in an order as philosophic and suggestive as our best powers will enable us to do; and this in order to help the earnest preachers of God's Holy Word.

Subject: Job's Appeal to Heaven.

“Only do not two things unto me;
Then will I not hide myself from thee.
Withdraw thine hand far from me;
And let not thy dread make me afraid:
Then call thou, and I will answer;
Or let me speak, and answer thou me.
How many are mine iniquities and sins?
Make me to know my transgression and my sin.
Wherefore hidest thou thy face,
And holdest me for thine enemy?
Wilt thou break a leaf driven to and fro?
And wilt thou pursue the dry stubble?
For thou writest bitter things against me,
And makest me to possess the iniquities of my youth.
Thou puttest my feet also in the stocks,
And lookest narrowly unto all my paths;
Thou settest a print upon the heels of my feet.
And he, as a rotten thing, consumeth,
As a garment that is moth-eaten.”—Job. xiii. 20—28.

EXEGETICAL REMARKS. Up to the present point in this reply of Job he had been contending with his three friends, and in his contention with them—(1) He had maintained the independency of thought in religion (chap. xii. 1—5). (2) He had argued against the doctrine that

one. The reason seems to be equivalent to some such need, be heavy upon me."

Ver. 21.—*Withdraw thine hand from me afraid.*" The hand of the "dread" the awful things, therefore, that he is of his body and the terror of

Ver. 22.—*"Then call thou, answer thou me."* When I reason even with Thee on the plaintiff I will answer will await Thy answer.

Ver. 23.—*"How many are mine iniquities, and my sin checked himself, and paused he concluded that it was for are mine iniquities," &c.* The number and magnitude of the

Ver. 24.—*"Wherefore hidest thy face from me?"* To hide the face of Job, and Job regarded his pleasure; but he sought the

Ver. 25.—*"Wilt thou break the dry stubble?"* W

even knowing that I was doing wrong, but wilt Thou visit upon me now all that I sinned in then?"—Bernard.

Ver. 27.—"Thou puttest my feet also in the stocks, and lookest narrowly unto all my paths; thou settest a print upon the heels of my feet."

"The passage seems to describe the feet as so confined in a clog or clogs, as not to preclude the power of motion. It may refer to the ancient custom of attaching a sort of clog to the feet of runaway slaves, when found, with the owner's name thereon, so that their flight might be retarded, and their course the more easily tracked, if they again attempted to escape. Dr. Good conceives that the figure may have been taken from the mode of treating the wild ass, an animal difficult to tame, and which it was necessary to clog in order to keep in subjection. In that case the last clause of the verse ('a print upon the heels of my feet') may imply that some particular mark of ownership or other quality was usually branded upon the hoof, or perhaps indented on the shoes. Stocks or clogs for the feet of men were, however, certainly used in Scripture times. The feet of Jeremiah were put in the stocks. What kind of stocks were used it is difficult to conjecture—whether they were encumbering clogs, or fetters that did not absolutely prevent, but only embarrassed motion, or were fixed frames that kept the prisoner stationary. Both kinds were in use very anciently. The fixed kinds, properly called stocks, were of different sorts, being frames of wood, with holes either for the feet only, or for the feet, the hands, and the neck at once. At Pompeii stocks have been found so contrived that ten prisoners might be chained by the leg, each leg separately, by the sliding of a bar. Some of these forms of confinement, particularly that which combined in some sort the pillory with the stocks, were very painful, and are mentioned in the account of the sufferings of the early Christian martyrs. The stocks used in India consist of a frame, which confines the prisoner's hands and feet, and obliges him to lie on the ground in a very distressing position, notwithstanding the freedom allowed to the head. Of confinement for the head, such as our pillory or the Chinese collar, we do not read in Scripture; but it is not improbable that the phrase, 'thou settest a print upon the heels of my feet,' may be illustrated from the practice of the Chinese of putting a seal over the part where the boards joined, so that it could not be opened without detection during the period in which it is appointed to be worn."—Kitto.

Ver. 28.—"And he, as a rotten thing, consumeth, as a garment that is moth-eaten." The idea of this verse seems to be that he (Job) was such a worthless creature that it was not worthy of God to lay such afflictions upon him. This verse ought to have been the commencement of the next chapter.



that? A tendency when under the Great Judge. The penitently concluded and vehemently great sinner because he was in the position. Deep within him, how the charge was wrong, and that of integrity, "fearing God," he turns from their unfounded quick and dead. Conscious of the under the foul allegations of the supreme tribunal with an unwillingness to be done. This instinct, which implies not only an innate Supreme Being, but an ineradicable and rectitude. We do not deny the existence of a God, or the fact that What appeals against false claims day in the supreme court of the earth that there nought but justice

Secondly: *Obstacles to the r*
are, great bodily affliction and
Job requested should be re

justified before Him, when he is on the rack of pain and under terror of the arrests of death? At such a time it is very bad to have the great work to do, but very comfortable to have it done as it was to Job, who, if he might but have a little breathing time, was ready either." Here is—

II. A MOMENTOUS INQUIRY. His inquiry refers to two things. First: To his *sins*. "How many are mine iniquities and sins?" How many? (1) *I am ignorant* of them. I am not conscious that I am guilty of sins that can justify my overwhelming sufferings. Men are often unconscious of their sins. How many? (2) *Thou knowest* them. Not one, even the most secret of them, has escaped Thine eye. How many? (3) *I desire* to know the worst. Terrible as the revelation may be, still let me have it: it must come out sooner or later, let the dark scroll be spread out before me now.

His inquiry refers—

Secondly: To his *sufferings*. "Wherefore hidest Thou Thy face?" (1) Is it *just* in Thee to treat me as if I were Thy foe? I am not conscious that I deserve it. Why I should be so afflicted, when thousands of sinners around me live in health and pleasure, I know not. Why? I want to see justice. (2) Is it *worthy* of Thee? "Wilt Thou break a leaf driven to and fro?" Why seek to crush an atom? The idea in the mind of Job seems to have been that it is unworthy of the Infinite even to pay attention to such a worthless creature as he, still less to pursue him. He should have remembered two things—that to God there is nothing great or small, and that man, however worthless, is influential.* Here is—

III. A GRIEVOUS COMPLAINT. He seems to complain of two things:—

First: The *reproduction of his sins*. "Thou makest me to possess the iniquities of my youth." It is a fact that the sins of youth come out in the groans of age. The want of knowledge, the force of passions, the susceptibility to influences, render youth specially liable to sin; and the laws of retribution, habit, memory, render it certain that those sins will be punished in after life. Youthful sins are bound with

* See "Homilist," Series IV., Vol. III., page 304.

the indissoluble chain of causation to man's futurity. Human experience is not like an isolated raindrop that falls from the clouds above and is soon exhaled by the sun, but it is like a river whose present character has been entirely formed by its past history: the soil through which it has flowed, the streams that have rolled into its bosom, have given to it its present hue, form, and volume. Man's actions of to-day are the result of those yesterday, and the cause of those to-morrow.* He seems to complain of—

Secondly: *The embarrassment of his sufferings.* "Thou puttest my feet also in the stocks, and lookest narrowly into all my paths; Thou settest a print upon the heels of my feet." Whatever might be the penal torture referred to in the passage, Job refers to it to express his awful consciousness of embarrassment and judicial inspection. He was hampered at every turn, and seemed watched by God with the most vigilant eye.

CONCLUSION. We cannot better close our reflections on this passage than by giving the following metrical version of the whole paragraph:—

"But now, O God! grant me but these two things,
And then I will not hide myself from Thee:
In mercy now withdraw Thy heavy hand,
And let me not be scared by dread of Thee.
Then call on me, and I will answer Thee;
Or let me speak, and answer thou in turn.
Oh, let me know the number of my sins,
And what iniquities Thou countest mine;
O tell me wherefore Thou dost hide Thy face,
And why Thou holdest me Thine enemy;
Say why such whirlwind storms to crush a leaf,
Or why so eagerly pursue a straw?
For Thou dost write against me bitter things:
My youthful sins Thou bringest to my mind;
Thou keenly watchest ev'ry step I take;
Thou, too, dost tether me to heavy clogs,
And, not content, dost ankle-chain my feet."

—H. J. Marten.

* For a full discourse on this subject see "Homilist," Series III., Vol. I., page 57.

Sermonic Glances at the Gospel of St. John.

As our purpose in the treatment of this Gospel is purely the development, in the briefest and most suggestive form, of Sermonic outlines, we must refer our readers to the following works for all critical inquiries into the author and authorship of the book, and also for any minute criticisms on difficult clauses. The works we shall especially consult are :—"Introduction to New Testament," by Bleek ; "Commentary on John," by Tholuck ; "Commentary on John," by Hengstenberg ; "Introduction to the Study of the Gospels," by Westcott ; "The Gospel History," by Ebrard ; "Our Lord's Divinity," by Liddon ; "St. John's Gospel," by Oosterzee ; "Doctrine of the Person of Christ," by Dornor ; Lange ; &c., &c.

Subject : Christ's Vindication of Himself against the Charge of Blasphemy. (2) The Proof of His Authority.

"If I bear witness of myself, my witness is not true. There is another that beareth witness of me ; and I know that the witness which he witnesseth of me is true. Ye sent unto John, and he bare witness unto the truth. But I receive not testimony from man : but these things I say, that ye might be saved. He was a burning and a shining light ; and ye were willing for a season to rejoice in his light. But I have greater witness than that of John ; for the works which the Father hath given me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me. And the Father himself, which hath sent me, hath borne witness of me. Ye have neither heard his voice at any time, nor seen his shape. And ye have not his word abiding in you ; for whom he hath sent, him ye believe not. Search the scriptures ; for in them ye think ye have eternal life : and they are they which testify of me. And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life. I receive not honour from men. But I know you, that ye have not the love of God in you. I am come in my Father's name, and ye receive me not : if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive. How can ye believe which receive honour one of another, and seek not the honour that cometh from God only ? Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father : there is one that accuseth you, even Moses, in whom ye trust. For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me : for he wrote of me. But if ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe my words ?"—John v. 31—47.

EXPOSITION. It must be kept in mind that Christ, from the 19th verse of this chapter, is vindicating Himself against the charge of blasphemy. His defence is logically arranged. It consists, first, of the *nature* of His

authority, ver. 19—29 ; and, secondly, a statement of the *proof* of His authority. This statement extends from verse 30 to the end of the chapter, and this is the paragraph we have now to notice.

Ver. 30, 31.—“*I can of mine own self do nothing,*” &c. For exposition of these verses see page 220.

Ver. 32.—“*There is another that beareth witness of me* (that is, concerning me), *and I know that the witness which he witnesseth of me is true.*” Who is this ? None other than the Father Himself, as appears in the sequel. He was well assured that the witness of His Father was true.

Ver. 33.—“*Ye sent unto John, and he bare* (he hath borne) *witness of the truth.*” In all probability Christ here refers to the deputation which the rulers sent to the Baptist, chap. iii. 19, and from whom they received a testimony concerning Christ.

Ver. 34.—“*But I receive not testimony from man.*” This does not mean that Christ rejected or undervalued the testimony of John, but that He did not need it, He was independent of it. “*But these things I say, that ye might be saved.*” He referred to John’s testimony, not for His own sake, but for theirs. They believed in John, and his testimony would tend to their salvation.

Ver. 35.—“*He was a burning and a shining light.*” “He was a lamp burning and shining. Christ is never called by the humble word here applied to John—a light-bearer, studiously used to distinguish him from his Master, but ever The Light (τὸ φῶς) in the most absolute sense.” —Brown. The Baptist was a lamp kindled by another antithetical to φῶς. “*And ye were willing for a season to rejoice in his light.*” There is a play of irony here referring to the hollow delight with which his testimony excited them.

Ver. 36.—“*But I have greater witness than that of John ; for the works which the Father hath given me to finish,*” &c. He means the testimony of His miracles was the testimony of His Father Himself Who had sent Him.

Ver. 37.—“*And the Father himself, which hath sent me, hath borne witness of me.*” Whether the reference is here to the testimony of His Father independent of His works or not, it is certain that Christ had a more direct testimony than that from the Father, as on the occasion of His baptism, when there came a voice from heaven saying, “*This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.*” “*Ye have neither heard his voice at any time, nor seen his shape.*” So deaf are your spiritual ears, and so sealed your eyes, that you neither hear nor see the Eternal Father.

Ver. 38.—“*And ye have not his word abiding in you.*” “You lack per-

manent inward appreciation of His words," the true Messianic idea is not in you. "*For whom he hath sent, him ye believe not.*" This is an effect and evidence of your not having the true idea within.

Ver. 39, 40.—"Search the scriptures." Or, more properly, "Ye do search the scriptures." "*For in them ye think ye have eternal life.*" You search the Scriptures expecting to find "eternal life" in them, that is in the mere letter of truth, but there is no life in the letter. "*They are they which testify of me. And ye will not come to me that ye might have life.*" Dr. Brown expresses the idea in the following words:—"With disregarding the Scriptures I charge you not: ye do indeed busy yourselves about them (He was addressing, it will be remembered, the rulers, ver. 16); rightly deeming them your charter of eternal life. But ye miss the great burden of them; of Me it is they testify: and yet to Me ye will not come for that eternal life which ye profess to find there, and of which they proclaim Me the ordained Dispenser."

Ver. 41.—"I receive not honour from men." "Honour," that is, applause, glory. This was a fact. They did not honour Him, among other reasons because He had not that royal pomp and pageantry with which they associated their Messiah.

Ver. 42.—"But I know you, that ye have not the love of God in you." He read their hearts, and discovered at once the cause of their spiritual blindness and depravity. They lacked love, love for God.

Ver. 43.—"I am come in my Father's name, and ye receive me not: if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive." How strikingly has this been verified in the history of the Jews. "From the time of the true Christ to our time," says Bengel, "sixty-four false Christs have been reckoned, by whom the Jews have been deceived."

Ver. 44.—"How can ye believe, which receive honour one of another, and seeketh not the honour which cometh from God only?" The idea is, So long as you set a high value upon the opinions of your fellow-men, you cannot honour me with that virtuous honour that comes from God.

Ver. 45.—"Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father: there is one that accuseth you, even Moses, in whom ye trust." "Referring, no doubt, to the accusations which they brought against Him, and the human trial upon which they put Him. Before the court He has assumed more and more the mien of a majestic judge. He has finally represented them as contradicting the testimony of God, as antichrists, pagans. They are disarmed by the authority and power of His words, and discharge Him. Now so far as He is concerned, He proposes to discharge them. He will not accuse them to the Father: but another, says He, will

accuse you, even Moses, in whom ye hope. This is the last, the mightiest stroke. That very Moses on whom they set their hope will accuse them, and put their hope to shame. Not exactly the Holy Scriptures, but Moses himself, in his spirit as the representative of the legal basis of the Holy Scriptures. If they rightly searched the Scriptures they would find Christ, and only Christ, in the Old Testament, even in the books of Moses alone. But they find Moses in them, and only Moses, only law even in the prophets; and on this omnipresent Moses, whose all the Scriptures are in their view, that is on the legal element of the Holy Scriptures, they placed their self-righteous confidence."—*Lange*.

Ver. 46. "For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me: for he wrote of me." If you believe Moses, you would believe me. An important testimony, as Alford says, to the subject of the whole Pentateuch.

Ver. 47.—"But if ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe my words?" A remarkable contrast, not absolutely putting Old Testament Scripture below His own words, but pointing to the office of those venerable documents to prepare Christ's way to the necessity universally felt for documentary testimony in revealed religion, and perhaps, as Stier adds, to the relation which the comparative 'letter' of the Old Testament holds to the more flowing words of 'spirit and life' which characterise the New Testament."

HOMILETICS. The subject is, as we have stated, *Christ's vindication of Himself against the charge of blasphemy*. This subject extends from the 19th verse to the end of the chapter. In His vindication He makes a very full statement of His Divine authority. He discloses: First: *Its nature*; and Secondly: He states its *proofs*. Our attention has been occupied with the former in a preceding discourse on verses 19 to 29. We have now to consider the latter, viz.:—

II. THE PROOFS OF HIS AUTHORITY. The proofs may be grouped under two general heads.

First: *His absolute devotion to the Eternal Will*. "I can of mine own self do nothing;" as I hear—that is, as I hear the actual, the sentence of God—"I judge, and my judgment is just." I can do nothing; I feel myself to be the mere organ of the Infinite Father. Love for Him is the inspiration of my being, His will is the absolute law that governs all my activities.

Elsewhere* we have raised the following truths from this verse;—that there is a moral difference in men concerning the judgment of Divine truth; that the diversity of judgment is dependent on their moral condition; that their moral condition is resolvable into two principles of action, self-seeking or God-seeking; that the adoption of the principle of God-seeking is the essential condition of all just judgments or moral truth. These principles explain the perversion of the Bible by its avowed disciples, indicate the method in which the Gospel should be preached, supply a test of fitness for the work of the Gospel ministry, and show the necessity of Divine influence. For a fuller amplification of these remarks, see discourse referred to above.*

But how is this absolute consecration of Christ to the Divine Will, which He here asserts, an authentication of His Divine authority? Because such a life is the highest proof of the power and presence of Divinity. The diviner the life a man lives, the more manifest is God in his history.

Secondly: *His authentication from the Eternal Himself.* "There is another that beareth witness of Me." Here the reference is undoubtedly to God the Father. He bore ample and mighty testimony to the Divine authority of Christ. And in these verses Christ refers to the means by which that testimony was expressed.

How? (1) By *John the Baptist*. "Ye sent unto John, and he bare witness unto the truth." Three things are here referred to concerning John. (a) His testimony. Where is that to be found? "John bare witness of Him, and cried, saying, This is He of Whom I spake; He that cometh after me is preferred before me, for He was before me." "And this is the record of John when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, Who art thou? He it is Who, coming after me, is preferred before me, Whose shoe's latchet I am not worthy to unloose." "And John bare record, saying, I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon Him." (b) His influence. "I receive not

* See "Homilist," Series II., Vol. II., p. 385.

testimony from men: but these things I say, that ye might be saved." The idea is, I do not require the testimony of John or of any man, but I quote John because you believe in him. He has influence with you, and his testimony may induce you to believe in Me, in order that you may be saved. You must believe in My Divine authority to be saved. John has borne testimony to that. You believe in John, and therefore I point you to him as a witness. (c) His character. "He was a burning and a shining light." He was a "light" that attracted to the Jordan all Judea and the regions round about. He was a "light" that all regarded as Divine. "All hold John as a prophet." He was a "light" which even Herod the king revered. "He feared John, knowing that he was a just man and holy." He was a brilliant light, "for amongst those that are born of women there has not appeared a greater than John the Baptist." Surely such a man's testimony was to be taken. Again, His Father authenticated His authority.

(2) By *miracles*. "But I have greater witness than that of John; for the works which the Father hath given Me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of Me, that the Father hath sent Me." The miracles of Christ were confessedly great and numerous. "If all His mighty works had been written in a book," &c., &c. Three facts are to be noticed here. (a) That those miracles were wrought of God. They were Divine, not human productions. How can this be proved? 1. Man *instinctively* ascribes all miracles to God. Anything approaching the miraculous in nature, men everywhere—the savage and the civilised—involuntarily conclude to be products of Divine interposition. Though their logic would not perhaps take them to this point, their intuition always does. 2. Men must *logically* conclude that miracles of such a moral description, and wrought by such a high moral character as that of Jesus of Nazareth, were Divine. Had His miracles breathed malevolence, and tended to immorality and unhappiness, the logic of human nature would have denied their Divinity. Reason would have protested against the con-

clusions of instinct. But in the case of Jesus the moral character of the Miracle-worker was so sublimely pure and loving, and His mighty works so benign and virtuous, that you are bound to ascribe them to the primal source of all power and goodness. Well might Christ say that "the same works that I do, bear witness of Me, that the Father hath sent Me." Another fact to be noticed here is—(b) That the God, who wrought the miracles, they practically ignored. "Ye have neither heard His voice nor seen His shape." These theoretic theists were practically atheists: they were without God in the world. The other fact to be noticed here is—(c) That they practically ignored this God because His word was not in their hearts. "Ye have not His word abiding in you." If the word—the truth of God—had been in them as an all-animating power, they would have heard and seen God everywhere. If there is no God within there is no God without. Men in whose hearts the Divine Word is not, have no ears to hear the Infinite, though He speak in thunder, no eyes to see Him, though He fills up their horizon. Again His Father authenticated His authority.

(3) By *Scripture*. "Search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of Me." The Scriptures did testify of Christ; Moses and the prophets were full of Him. These Jews did "search the Scriptures," they made a habit, a conscience of this. "Ye search the Scriptures," says Christ. They searched the Scriptures, thinking that thereby they should have "eternal life," but they had no life; they had not found Christ Who is THE LIFE. Two things are suggested here. (a) There are men who search the Scriptures, who never go to Christ. The Jews did so; and hundreds are to be found in this age who live in the study of the Scriptures, who have never gone to Christ. They find sometimes a theological Christ, or an ecclesiastical Christ, but not *the* Christ of God, the living, loving, personal Saviour of the world. Ye search the Scriptures "and ye will not come to Me." The Scriptures, which are designed to bring men to Christ, often keep them away.

(b) The reason men do not go to Christ is because they are more in sympathy with the human than with the Divine. "I know you, that ye have not the love of God in you." You have no sympathy with His character, His works and aims; on the contrary, your sympathies are all with the thoughts and doings of man. Worldly honours and worldly pleasures so occupy your minds that you cannot see the Divine. "How can ye believe which receive honour one of another, and seek not the honour that cometh from God only?" How solemnly true this is! Conventional ideas of honour and happiness blind the eyes of men to the honour and blessedness that come "from God only." The world's heroes are evermore the incarnations of the world's thoughts, and those thoughts are, alas! far away from the immutable realities. He whose character and status are most in keeping with the popular sentiment will ever be the greatest magnate for the time. His Father authenticated His authority.

(4) By *Moses*. "Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father; there is one that accuseth you, even Moses, in whom ye trust," &c. (a) They professed the utmost confidence in Moses. Moses was their law-giver, their prophet, their moral master; they said, We are Moses' disciples, and "we know that God spake unto Moses." (b) Moses testified to the Divine authority of Christ. "Had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed Me, for he wrote of Me." He spoke of Me as the "seed of the woman," as the "Shiloh," as a "star out of Jacob," as a prophet that should be "raised from amongst his brethren." You believe in Moses, and Moses testified of Me. What then? If you reject Me: 1. Moses himself will condemn you, "Do not think that I shall accuse you to the Father: there is one that accuseth you, even Moses." I need pronounce no judgment upon your conduct, I leave you with Moses. The man in whom you trust, he shall condemn you. 2. My words will not be credited by you. "If you believe not his writings, how shall ye believe My words?" After all your professions you believe not Moses, or else you would believe Me.

CONCLUSION. "The discourse of our Saviour presents some of the highest subjects for human thought, and some of the most impressive reasons why we, as well as the Jews, should believe in Him as the Messiah, the Son of God. The testimony of John the Baptist, the sublime miracles which Christ performed, the witness which God repeatedly gave Him, and the prophetic declarations of the Mosaic dispensation, still speak to us through the living page of the book of inspiration; and can any man innocently reject such various and overwhelming evidence? Or, if any one is too hardened to be convinced by these arguments, though strong and conclusive, oh, let him not resist the pleadings of compassion and the merciful intercessions which broke forth from the quivering lips of the Divine Sufferer on the Cross. Let love persuade where reason cannot convince."

Germ of Thought.

SERMONIC NOTES ON THE VISIONS OF EZEKIEL.

No. XI.

Subject: Sin the Worst Sorrow.*

"Also the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Son of man, behold, I take away from thee the desire of thine eyes with a stroke: yet neither shalt thou mourn nor weep, neither shall thy tears run down. Forbear to cry, make no mourning for the dead, bind the tire of thine head upon thee, and put on thy shoes upon thy feet, and cover not thy lips, and eat not the bread of men. So I spake unto the people in the morning; and at even my wife died: and I did in the morning as I was commanded. And the people said unto me, Wilt thou not tell us what these things are to us, that thou doest so? Then I answered them, The word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Speak unto the house of Israel, Thus saith the Lord God Behold, I will profane my sanctuary, the excellency of your strength,

* Another aspect of this passage will be found on page 299.

the desire of your eyes, and that which your soul pitieth ; and your sons and your daughters whom ye have left shall fall by the sword. And ye shall do as I have done : ye shall not cover your lips, nor eat the bread of men. And your tires shall be upon your heads, and your shoes upon your feet : ye shall not mourn nor weep ; but ye shall pine away for your iniquities, and mourn one toward another. Thus Ezekiel is unto you a sign : according to all that he hath done shall ye do ; and when this cometh, ye shall know that I am the Lord God."—Ezekiel xxiv. 15—24.

THIS vision, seen by the prophet on the same occasion and with reference to the same event as the preceding one, was most immediately connected with himself, although mainly designed as a revelation to the people. His experience and his behaviour in it were well fitted to strike both himself and others, and to compel attention to the great lessons that were being taught. For ordinarily in such an affliction as the death of his wife, an ancient Oriental would have uttered vehement expressions of grief, and surrounded himself with all the paraphernalia of woe. Whereas here, whilst we have intense emotion, we have the self-restraint of the Stoic. Whether this bereavement was only in a vision, or in fact as a fulfilment of a vision, the lessons taught are the same. The perfect restraint in great sorrow, because of the presence of a yet greater woe, is the idea of what we deem to have been first Ezekiel's vision, then his actual experience, and then the actual experience of the Jewish people. We notice, then, *The temporary and local significance of the vision, and of its two-fold fulfilment.* Here is a man losing by death a wife. The greatness of his affliction is to be seen in the fact that she was (1) *eminently beloved*—"the desire of his eyes;" she was (2) *suddenly taken away*—"with a stroke." In this bitter affliction he was to "forbear to cry or to make mourning," but to appear in the discharge of his duties amongst the people as though nothing had happened to him. Evidently the more terrible sorrow, before which this was to be hushed, was the guilt and impending doom of the city. Here also is a city losing its glory, its sanctuary, "the desire of its eyes," and its sons and daughters suffering destruction. But amid

all that the people are to restrain their lamentations, because this woe is dwarfed, and paled, and eclipsed in the presence of the greater woe, the sins that had incurred this doom. We gather, then, clearly, *the universal and eternal teaching of all this*. Thrice proclaimed—first in vision, then in the prophet's bereavement, then in the destruction of the city, and in the calmness that is to be maintained in each of these three cases, because there is a greater calamity in the background—is this great lesson, *Sin the worst sorrow*. This is so because—

I. OTHER SORROWS MAY HAVE NO EVIL, BUT EVEN GOOD IN THEM; THIS IS ESSENTIALLY AND ETERNALLY EVIL. In a bereavement, in a national calamity, as also in bodily sufferings and many social griefs, it is manifest there may be no moral wrong. There may indeed be the highest moral good. Some such may have been the result of noble self-sacrifice; and if the first it may be bravely and resignedly borne, its lessons humbly and reverently learned; such an affliction may often be a means of highest spiritual good, proving the familiar truth that—

“The path of sorrow, and that path alone,
Leads to the world where sorrow is unknown.”

But sin is in its essence, in its indulgence, in its outcome, utterly evil, an object of nothing else than commiseration, loathing, and hatred. So infinitely more is sin to be bewailed than the heaviest of other sorrows, that the Holy Saviour on the way to the Cross turned to those who wept for the agonies He, the sinless, was enduring, and about to endure, and said, “Weep not for Me; weep for yourselves and for your children.” Sin is the worst sorrow, because—

II. OTHER SORROWS ARE REMEDIABLE, THIS LEADS TO DESTRUCTION. Time heals many, if not most wounds. Ezekiel might see “the desire of his eyes” again in the heavenly world; there sundered ties and friendship may be eternally knit together. There love may “clasp inseparable hands.” And as to the temple in Jerusalem, it could be rebuilt again, as indeed it was. But the sin of the city that the prophet mourned, and for which the people were to pine away, could

know no amelioration. A cancerous and pestilential thing, it could know no end but burning. Sin is the worst sorrow, because—

III. OTHER SORROWS MAY COME DIRECT FROM GOD, THIS IS EVER IN DIRECT ANTAGONISM TO HIM. Ezekiel traced his sudden bereavement direct to God, and in this found a solace. Afflictions argue not God's anger; they often prove His care: "As many as I love I rebuke and chasten." But in view of every sin we have to learn, "Let no man when he is tempted say, I am tempted of God, for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth He any man." Sin is the worst sorrow, because—

IV. OTHER SORROWS HAVE TO DO WITH MEN IN THEIR RELATION TO OTHERS, THIS WITH HIS OWN INNER BEING AND HIS RELATION TO GOD. Outward circumstances may be disturbed by the first, but the inmost consciousness is outraged by the second. The entire nature of man is involved in the sorrow of sin: and his relationship to God, which touches him at every point, and will for ever, is revolutionised. Whilst in prospect of all other woes, a soul may sing in subdued tones of submission—

" With emptied arms and treasures lost,
I'll praise Thee while my days go on."

CONCLUSION. First: *Rightly weigh your own sorrows.* Be more sad for failure of your own high purposes, for the fickleness of will, for fitful feverishness of desire, than for disease of body or perplexity of circumstance. Be more sad for the selfishness of others than for any harm they can inflict on you.

Second: *Rightly deal with the world's sorrows.* Pity their poverty, heal their sickness, but most of all grieve for and contend with their sin.

Third: *Rightly value the Saviour's mission.* The axe is laid to the root of the deadly tree of sorrows. He came to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself.

Bristol.

URIJAH R. THOMAS.

The Chief Founders of the Chief Faiths.

Around no men, amongst all the millions of mankind, does so much interest gather as around the Founders of the Chief Religious Faiths of the world. Such men are sometimes almost lost in the obscurity of remote ages, or of the mystery with which they surrounded themselves, or their early followers invested them. But whenever they can be discerned, their characters analysed, and their deeper experiences understood, they are found to be not only leaders and masters of the multitudes who have adopted more or less of their creed and ritual, but also interpreters (more or less partial) of the universal yearnings of the soul of man. Such men may have seemed to sit at the fountains of human thought and feeling, and to have directed or have coloured the mysterious streams, but they have quite as often indicated in their doctrines and in their deeds the strong courses of the thoughts and feeling which are more permanent and deeper than any one man or even any one age could completely discover. The aim of these papers will be, with necessary brevity, to review the chief of such men, noting suggestively rather than exhaustively, their *biography*, their *circumstances*, their *theology*, and their *ethics*. And in concluding the series it is purposed to compare and to contrast each and all of them with the "One Man whom in the long roll of ages we can love without disappointment, and worship without idolatry, the Man Christ Jesus."

PRINCIPAL BOOKS OF REFERENCE.—Max Müller's "History of Ancient Sanskrit Literature," "The Science of Language," "Chips from a German Workshop;" Rev. F. D. Maurice's "Religions of the World;" Archdeacon Hardwick's "Christ and other Masters;" Rev. J. W. Gardner's "Faiths of the World;" Miss Mary Carpenter's "Last Days of Rammohun Roy;" Rev. F. W. Farrar's "Witness of History to Christ;" Rev. A. W. Williamson's "Journey in North China;" Canon Liddon's Bampton Lecture on "Our Lord's Divinity;" Cousin's "History of Modern Philosophy;" S. Clarke's "Ten Great Religions;" Father Huc's "Christianity in China."

No. VII.

ZOROASTER.

(Continued from page 296.)

ETHICS.

IT has been well said that the religions in which the moral element is depressed, as those of Babylon, Assyria, Egypt, Greece, Rome, are also without personal founders. But moral religions are the religions of persons, and so we have the systems of Confucius, Buddha, Moses, Mohammed,—and so also of Zoroaster, who is now before us. He is the central figure of the whole religion of the Avesta. In the

most ancient of those books he said all the *pure* Zarathustra, good in thought, speech, and work." Believing in and proclaiming the great moral conflict at which we have glanced, in the very front of which are the rival principals Ormazd, the good divinity, and Ahriman, the "evil-minded," it becomes essential to know what in Zoroaster's judgment was moral good, what moral evil, and how the former was to be attained and the latter avoided. With reference to Ormazd, we find that he is not only in accordance with his title, "God of the Aryans," but also almost the Supreme Intelligence. The "greatest, best, most beautiful, strongest, most intelligent, most graceful, and most holy," was of course to have as his human servants and worshippers those who would practically aid him in the conflict with, and final overthrow of, Ahriman. In this war the weapons of the good man were not carnal, but spiritual. "Pure thoughts," going out into "true words," and resulting in "right actions,"—this the whole duty of man. From the hymns, confessions, prayers, comprehended in the Liturgy of which we have spoken, we have to gather indirectly all that can be known of the ethical teaching of Zoroaster. And thence we gather, first, that the *standard* of true morals is the revealed character of Ormazd; second, that the *source* of individual morality is within, in the thoughts and desires of the inner man, so that there are crimes of omission as well as of commission. Then it is taught that sins against *character*, whether against the character of others or one's own character, are to be avoided and repented of. So also with sins against father, mother, sister, brother, wife, child, spouse. So also with sins of *uncleanliness*, such as interfere with personal cleanliness, and even tidiness, and contact with the dead. Sins, too, against the creatures of Ormazd, as stars, moon, sun, and the red burning sun, five kinds of animals. And a great group of common sins of various degrees of enormity are under the ban of this teaching; *e.g.*, "pride, haughtiness, covetousness, slandering the dead, anger, envy, the evil eye, shamelessness, looking at with evil intent, or with evil concupiscence, stiff-

neckedness, discontent with godly arrangements, self-willed-ness, sloth, despising others, false judgment, idol-worship, running with one shoe, breaking or omission of mid-day prayer, theft, robbery, whoredom, witchcraft, &c., &c.

It will be inferred that the Scriptures of the Persians is not a system of dogmatics, but a book of worship. It is to be read in private by the laity, or to be recited by the priests in public. Nevertheless it is our chief guide to the morals of the Faith. "The deepest convictions come to light in such a collection, not indeed in a systematic statement, but in sincerest utterance. It will contain the faith of the heart rather than the speculations of the intellect. Such a work can hardly be other than authentic; for men do not forge liturgies, and if they did, could hardly introduce them into a system of religious community." The substance of the law is the command, "THINK PURELY, SPEAK PURELY, ACT PURELY."

Bristol.

URIAH R. THOMAS.

The Preacher's Finger-Post.

SKETCHES FROM GENESIS (29).

JOSEPH SOLD INTO EGYPT.

"And when they saw him afar off, even before he came near unto them, they conspired against him to slay him."—Gen. xxxvii. 18—36.

Two very different spirits are revealed in this passage. The brethren of Joseph, with the exception of Reuben, are represented as being entirely under the influence of jealousy; they are

dead to every feeling but that of revenge. The spirit of mercy and compassion had taken possession of Reuben's heart, and he seeks to prevent his brothers from carrying out their murderous plot.

I. Man under the influence of jealousy.

1. Jealousy leads a man to slander. "And they said one to another, Behold, this dreamer cometh." The

dreams which Joseph saw, and told his brethren of, had filled their hearts with the greatest animosity towards him; their jealousy was roused; to think that all their sheaves stood round about and made obeisance to his, and that the sun and moon and the eleven stars made obeisance to him, was too much for them to bear: and now when they saw him coming, they could not speak of him as their *brother*, but they must call him "*this dreamer*." Jealousy and slander generally go hand in hand; the principal reason that so much slander exists in every circle of society in the present day is jealousy: if a person through his perseverance and skill gets on in the world, he will find not a few who are ready to speak something to his discredit: these persons think that by reducing others in the estimation of the public they will exalt themselves; their selfishness is such that to hear others highly spoken of is the greatest affliction to them.

2. Jealousy leads to falsehood: "And we will say, Some evil beast hath devoured him." "The way of transgressors is hard." One sin leads to another; these men had arranged to shed their brother's blood, and this deed must be hid from the knowledge of their aged father, so falsehood is resorted to. If a man walks in the light he has no need

to fear, no enemy can harm him, he is conscious of his own integrity; this makes him strong, and renders him invincible: but let him once depart from the path of rectitude, weakness creeps in, and he must resort to some help to keep him from falling. Let divine truth be the only refuge of your soul.

3. Jealousy hardens the heart. The brothers cared not what would become of Joseph; when they saw him depart with the Ishmaelites, they never asked themselves the question how *they* should like the hard and cruel bondage: the sufferings of their brother were lost sight of. Neither was the anguish which their father would endure taken account of: they were afraid that the dominion and glory of their brother would become greater than their own, so their jealous spirits could not rest till he was out of sight. Jealousy has no pity, no compassion: she is to be found treading the path of hatred and revenge oftener than that of mercy and love.

4. Jealousy leads to crime: "Come now, therefore, and let us slay him, and cast him into some pit." That was the original plan, only they were prevented by Reuben from executing it. Their hatred had reached its climax; when men can sit down quietly, to meditate, to consult together

how to murder another, they have lost almost every particle of humanity. When reading the newspapers of the day, how many victims are being offered annually in our land to this relentless goddess, Jealousy! Most of the wars that have devastated kingdoms and nations are a lasting monument of the mighty power and fiendish cruelty of this unholy feeling in the human heart.

II. Man under the influence of mercy: "And Reuben heard it, and he delivered him out of their hands; and he said, Let us not kill him."

1. The merciful are in the minority. Only one brother lifted up his voice against this cruel plot, all the rest desired their brother's death. Different dispositions are to be met in society; there is a great amount of cruelty, oppression, selfishness, and bigotry to be seen around us; but little mercy comparatively. The good and merciful in every age have been few compared with the ungodly: but that is no reason why they should be despised and treated with contempt; their cause is a good one, and destined to triumph in the end: there is a time coming when all tyranny and oppression shall be banished from the face of the earth; and mercy shall wield her sceptre over all hearts. "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy."

2. The merciful lose sight of self. Reuben was the first-born, and strange to say he was the only defender of Joseph. If the dreams were to become true, it would be more difficult apparently for Reuben to bow down before his brother than for any of the rest; inasmuch as he stood at the head of the family, his birthright conferred upon him certain privileges in connection with the family, so that his dignity would be more deeply wounded. But he forgets self in his anxiety to shield his brother from harm. The merciful man thinks more of the condition of others, and of the best plan by which he can render them assistance, than of his own interests. The highest manifestation of mercy the world ever had was in the life and death of the Lord Jesus. Selfishness never entered His heart. He was tempted more than once to forget others, and to enjoy the ease and comforts of this life; but His love for man was such that He did not hesitate for a moment what course to pursue. Those who have been drinking of His merciful spirit show mercy. Selfishness dries up the streams of mercy.

3. The merciful are always ready to assist others. Reuben does not only utter words of compassion, and pities his brother's condition, but he tries to save him from the

hands of his brethren. His scheme was the best, perhaps, that could be devised under the circumstances: "And Reuben said unto them, Shed no blood, but cast him into this pit that is in the wilderness, and lay no hand upon him: that he might rid him out of their hands, to deliver him to his father again." If we formed our judgment of some individuals by hearing them speak, it would be that they are some of the most humane and compassionate men on the earth; but their deeds do not correspond with their words. The merciful are not content with the mere feeling of pity towards those who are morally below them, but they hasten to their assistance: their hand as well as their heart goes forth towards them. The sphere wherein we can show mercy is larger; the fallen are numerous; voices from all quarters reach our ears crying for help; let us answer them in mercy.

Falmouth.

CYMRU.

Subject: SOUL-CULTURE.

"Let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not."—Gal. vi. 9.

Soul-culture is here presented under the metaphor of farming; such representation is not unfrequent in the Holy Book. Observe three things:—

I. Soul-culture is "WELL-DOING." It is important to remark that soul-culture implies something more than attention to our own personal condition. Indeed, so closely has the author of our existence united souls together, that we can scarcely succeed in getting good to ourselves unless we endeavour to impart good to others. In watering others we ourselves get watered.

In sooth, the man who labours most self-denyingly for the good of others, is the most effectively employed in the training of his own soul. The man who does nothing for others is doing nothing of advantage to himself. But our point is that soul-culture is well-doing. Well-doing is not the doing of the superstitious, the formalist, the exclusive, the recluse—involves not the training of any particular faculty of the soul, but the training of the entire man under the master impulse of love.

First: This work is "well doing," because it is in *accordance with the will of God*. As truly as it is the will of God that the farmer should cultivate his fields, it is His will that man should train his own soul. It is worth training, it is a soil that contains unnumbered germs of power, capable of unbounded growth.

Secondly: This work is

"well-doing," because it is *indispensable to the well-being of mankind*. As the labour of the husbandman is essential to the physical life of mankind, so the labour of soul-culture is essential to the spiritual elevation of the race. It is the labour of soul-culture that has turned the marshes and the wildernesses of barbaric life into the beauty and fruitfulness of modern civilisation. Observe—

II. Soul-culture has its DIFFICULTIES. "Be not weary in well-doing." The farmer has difficulties to contend with in his work—unfertile soil, foul weather, &c. And great are the difficulties in the work of spiritual culture. His own spiritual insensibility, impure passions, and moral infirmities, the spiritual indifference of society, the ingratitude of those whom he toils to benefit, and the little apparent success that comes out of his efforts, are to him great trials in his work. Albeit these difficulties should not dishearten, the work in itself is useful. Everything worth having requires a struggle. "Through much tribulation you enter the kingdom." Observe—

III. Soul-culture will MEET WITH ITS REWARD. "In due season we shall reap, if we faint not." Mark—

First: The *certainty* of the reward—"shall." The laws

of causation, influence, memory, justice, all render it impossible for any good effort to fail. Every good effort is a divine seed planted in the soul, and grow it must. Mark—

Secondly: The *condition* of the reward. "If ye faint not." If you grow weary, faint, retire from the labour, all your past work is lost. You must toil on. Mark—

Thirdly: The *seasonableness* of the reward. "In due season." The season is fixed, and it is the best season. "Let us not, therefore, be weary in well-doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not."

Subject: THE WORK OF WORKS.

"Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord."—1 Cor. xv. 58.

"Therefore." This is the practical conclusion of the sublime argument which Paul had conducted on the resurrection in the preceding verses. All true doctrines lead to practice. "Therefore"—because death is not your end, because you are to live body and soul in a future state—"be ye steadfast."

I. The work of soul restoration is SPECIALLY DIVINE.

It is "the work of the Lord." The work of the Lord is illimitable. The universe is His handiwork, and all its movements are His operations. Providence is His work. But the "work" referred to in the text, viz., the spiritual restoration of mankind, is in a special sense His. It is His great work. Isaiah speaks of it as a creation that will eclipse in glory the material universe. Jesus always spoke of it as the great work. First: Think of the *preparation* for this work. Four thousand years were occupied, involving a long series of sacrifices, priests, seers, miracles, as preliminary. Secondly: Think of the *sacrifices* made to accomplish this work. Christ came into this world the incarnate God, lived, suffered, and died here, &c. Thirdly: Think of the *unceasing agency* of the *Divine spirit* in order to effect this work. He is always striving with men from age to age and in all lands. Fourthly: Think of the *wonderful results* of this work. Millions of lost souls redeemed to the knowledge, image, fellowship, and service of Almighty God. What is the value of one soul? What is the influence that one soul can exert on the universe? This, then, may emphatically be called the "work of the Lord." It is the field which He—the great

Husbandman—has been cultivating. He will make it one day His choicest garden. It is the temple which He—the great Architect—has been building, it will excel in glory all former structures. It is the new creation which He is accomplishing, before it will pale into dimness all other productions.

II. The work of soul-restoration DEMANDS THE MOST EARNEST EFFORTS OF MANKIND. "Steadfast, unmovable." There are some works of the Lord in which we cannot engage. We cannot help to control the ocean, guide the stars, or even create a blade of grass, but here we are "labourers together with Him." First: Our labour must be *invincible*. The two words, "steadfast and unmovable," express this. So many are the impulses within, so many are the forces without, opposing the work, that nothing but an invincible determination can carry us through. We must have a purpose strong enough to bend and subordinate everything to itself. "This one thing I do," says Paul. Secondly: Our labour must be *abounding*. "Always abounding." The spirit of this work should reign in us, everywhere and at all times. As the parental element inspires the mother, and mingles with all her domestic arrangements and pleasures, so this spirit must

inspire us and mingle with all our undertakings. It should sweeten our daily toil and breathe into our recreations and amusements. The distinction between the secular and the spiritual is a theological fiction. Religion in a man is either everywhere or nowhere, everything or nothing. Labour and business, as well as the Gospel, are means of grace. As the life of the plant requires the tempest to bend its fibres, as well as the calm to yield it repose, so the religious life requires for its development the rough element of worldly business as well as the smoother influences of spiritual devotion.

III. The work of soul-restoration **MUST INEVITABLY SUCCEED.** "Forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord." There are two kinds of vain labour. (1) That which aims at a worthless end. Therefore, if it succeeds, it is useless. (2) That which is directed to a good end, but can never realise it, simply because it is too indeterminate and feeble.

But here is a work that must succeed. Every true thought, every earnest prayer, every Godly deed, carry in themselves success. As all the elements and forces of this world go to build up a new stratum around the globe's surface, for geologists of coming ages to study, so all that I do, and think, and say in the work of the Lord goes to give blessedness to my being. Inasmuch, therefore, as you cannot fail in this work, labour.

IV. The work of soul restoration will **FULLY REALISE ITS SUCCESS IN THE FUTURE WORLD.** "Therefore," says Paul, "were this life our all, our spiritual labour might be considered vain." What boots our striving after knowledge, our efforts to build up a noble character, if the grave be our end? But there is a future, and in it there is a full reward. All the waters of holy thought and effort we now receive into our being go to make a well within us that shall spring up to everlasting life.

CHARACTER.—"Friends, property, even our own bodies we leave behind us in death, but our characters we bear with us into the vast unknown. All the deeds wrought in or by the body are the materials out of which the moral character is built. Deeds repeated become habits, and habits become forces that sway and shape the moral man."

Pith of Renowned Sermons.

No. XXVIII.—HORACE BUSHNELL, D.D.

Subject : GOD ORGANISING IN THE CHURCH HIS ETERNAL SOCIETY.

“But ye are come unto mount Zion,” &c.—Heb. xii. 22.

WHEN we read this passage we seem scarcely to know what world it is in or about, and not much better what world we are in ourselves. “Ye *are* come,” says the apostle, and yet a great part of the terms which follow appear proper only to the Kingdom of God above. Which blending may be, on the ground of a large analogy and comprehensive unity, all the more fit for the purpose I have in hand, viz., to magnify the Church of God, and freshen up some due conception of its universality and of our responsibility for it. It seems to be a gloomy sign of our time that so many are evidently losing interest in the Church and respect for it. What, after all, say many of its own members, is the use of the church? Is it not, in fact, gone by already? No, nor ever can be. Did not Christ purchase it with His own blood, and set it on a rock, and declare that the gates of hell should not prevail against it? It is the grand everlasting fact of the creation of God.

When we say that man is a social being we mean that he and all other like moral natures are items only, or atoms, incomplete beings, till they become organically set and morally joined in society. Natural instincts and family affections are but the types of that vaster love principle that claims their moral and socially religious nature, in which they are kindled as by a kind of infinite aspiration, wanting, in fact, the whole universe—or all there is in it of righteous mind—each to possess it, and, in the possession, be himself complete. The principles that are to organise a perfect society, are of course

identical in all worlds. But men must be made capable of it; and here we strike into the text, which bears upon its face, as it were, a church celestial and a church terrestrial. The distinction of the two is *society organised* and *society organising*.

I. THE SOCIETY ORGANISED. It is called a city because it is the most condensed, completest form of society, gathering in "angels, an innumerable company, the firstborn of the Church, and the spirits of just men made perfect."

In this organised society there is no distribution by sect, or any name maintained against other names. Though it will be strange if gone-by creations are not kept in memory, as by calling these Saturnians, these Orionites, and these earthborn people; but these terms are not antagonistic, but only show the variety of their population. Again, it is not bodied under official magistracies. There are no pontiffs, prelates, bishops, priests, or deacons. These had their day and uses, though the organisation was never from them, but from God, and the headship of His Son. I do not mean that there are no precedences in stature and personal weight, and consequent dignity and power, and that these are not lifted into virtual leadership. But they are gladly held in reverence, wanted for the perfect society by the humbler natures. Again, no theologic base is needed. The society finished, being truth itself, can bear to be free. Let us now look at the crystallising power in which the grand celestial society is organised.

First: *At the base of all we find the righteousness and love of God.* All sinless beings stand, not in their own integrity, but by having His righteousness by faith upon them—a common inspiration. But in spirits that were fallen this must be restored, and here comes in the love of God as the quickening grace of the cross.

Again, they coalesce in worship, the grandest felicity and the most effective spell of organisation. Worship is the highest joy of the mind, because it is the looking up to what is highest and most adorably great. And in that common joy they unite for ever in closer, more powerful

bonds. Then, they doubtless have common works—sometimes sent forth as for guard and watch, or as convoys home of spirits departed, and as escort trains for the Almighty.

They are united also by their victories; for, whether they have vanquished sin or temptation, or great forces of hate and cruelty, banded against them, they all come in bearing palms. There are no doubtful pretenders, for their enrolment is by inside knowledge, and allows them to know even as they are known. Note here, that when John shows this grand society fully organised, you hardly know whether the upper world is descending upon this, or whether this is borne upward to the other. No matter, enough that the eternal, exact society-life is come, represented by the figure of an exactly cubal city. Thus, in stammering words, we sketch our conception of the Church above, and now descend to a relative conception.

II. THE CHURCH BELOW THE SOCIETY ORGANISING. It is, in fact, the same as the other, "one family." The Church, as we are now speaking, is "the communion of saints." Doubtless, it is competent for any brotherhood meeting in the Spirit to make here what form of organisation they please, if only they can find room to grow in it. But these are only the scaffolding of the building. When sects are divisions, they are so far evil, but when they are only distributions, they may produce a friction necessary to life in souls partly benumbed by sin. And different names help out the enlargement of our charity. But let us inquire for the power that works towards organisation.

The lowest form is seen in the wear of contriving we submit to in providing church edifices and preachers, in making ourselves responsible for the provisioning and perpetuating the Gospel institution.

Then our relations in church brotherhood are a continual drill. The whole body of our fraternity is tinged with badness, and we sometimes lose patience, and protest that the material looks worse than that of the world. But we come back to the living love of God, and learn that the Church is His hospital,

where He nurses His morally broken children, loving them not for what they are but for what He can make them. Then, again, we have the bad outside to work for, and here we are drawn to the closest sympathy. And then, perhaps, we have our times of inspiration in society, and have our hearts burning in the same divine fire.

Our common hope is also a great consolidating power. Even as we sometimes see, when our birds of passage, hastening on to the lands where they summer, hook themselves to each other as they fly, in lines of order, pulsing on the air in a common time-beat of their wings.

But we must here name two points: First, we must have times of solitude and spaces of withdrawalment; and, secondly, we must have the liberty of our own thoughts. To be always in publicity, to have joys always ventilated by expression, would become wearisome beyond endurance. The grand organisation will enjoy themselves all the more that they have ways of withdrawalment, having confidence in all to know that never in their most secret moments will they think anything which is not sweet, and friendly, and right. It now remains but distinctly to state some of the points of benefit I have been having in view.

1. Let no one disrespect the Church because there is something evil in it. What is it but a mill that runs for the grinding out of evil?

2. It is neither wise, nor right, to be fastidious here. What if Christ had happened to be fastidious, how would it be even now with you?

3. It is every good man's duty to acknowledge the Church, and be a hearty, faithful member in it. Say not you belong to the Church universal, counting that enough. That is, you are going forward into the everlasting society, there to meet no solitary creature with whom you stood shoulder to shoulder in love and sacrifice.

4. It ought by this time to be clear, my brethren, that there is no other cause or institution now on foot in the world which is at all comparable for benefit and dignity with the

Church of God. It has outlived two or three tiers of great empires and created new ones. It would take hours just to give the shining roll of names that, in worth and genius, and true sainthood, have been marching out into their great history in it for these almost nineteen hundred years. It is, I grant, in some sense an awful history, having, as it were, Jacob and Esau struggling in it for the birthright. The woes are sharp, the fires are hot, the prisons are bursting with wail ; women-martyrs, child-martyrs, the general bleeding host of persecuted merit moves on, as it were, in procession to die. Yet, from age to age, it hath been rock, as the Saviour promised, and it still stands firm, as no political state or kingdom could have stood, even for a generation ; till now we see it emerging, as we think, in the grace alone of the Cross : in that to be full-organised society, complete, everlasting, universal, inviolable brotherhood.

W. HARRIS.

Camberwell.

THE SOUL. — "Great as the world is, the soul is greater. The world cannot think of its Creator ; the soul can. The world cannot act contrary to the will of its Creator ; the soul can. The world will not exist for ever ; the soul will. As a leaf this planet shall fall from the forest of existence, as a passing cloud it shall melt into thin air. But the soul has an imperishable existence. Who can tell the value of a soul ? Think of its capabilities. Recall the wonders it has achieved, and is still achieving. Think of the influence which it exerts ! One soul can pour into an age a flood of sentiment that shall beat through the heart of centuries. That one act of Adam vibrates in all hearts to-day."

Seeds of Sermons from the Minor Prophets.

If the Bible as a whole is inspired, it is of vast importance that all its Divine ideas should be brought to bear upon the living world of men. Though the pulpit is the organ Divinely intended for this work, it has been doing it hitherto in a miserably partial and restricted method. It selects isolated passages, and leaves whole chapters and books for the most part untouched. Its conduct to the Minor Prophets may be taken as a case in point. How seldom are they resorted to for texts, and yet they abound with splendid passages throbbing with Divine ideas. It is our purpose to go through this section of the Holy Word; selecting, however, only such verses in each chapter and book as seem the most suggestive of truths, of the most vital interest, and universal application.

We begin with HOSEA. The remembrance of some facts connected with this man will greatly help us in our endeavours to reach the meaning and feel the power of certain of his utterances. He was a native of Israel, and lived in Samaria about 700 or 800 years B.C. His prophecy seems to have embraced a period of about 60 years, from Jeroboam's death to Hezekiah's ascension to the throne. He was contemporary with Isaiah, and preceded Joel, Jonah, and Amos. His prophecies are directed almost exclusively to the ten tribes who had sunk into the deepest idolatry. His style, as a writer, is very peculiar. "It is," says De Witte, "abrupt, unrounded, and ebullient, his rhythm hard, leaping, and violent." Like a bee he has been said to fly from one flower to another, to suck the honey from all the blossoms.

HOSEA.

No. L.

Subject: GENUINE HUMAN GOODNESS.

"Therefore turn thou to thy God: keep mercy and judgment, and wait on thy God continually."—Hosea xii. 6.

Delitzsch renders the verse thus: "And thou to thy God shall return, keep love, and right, and hope continually in thy God." The new translation gives no new idea. The few words may be regarded as representing genuine human goodness. Looking at it in this respect it includes three things:—

I. SPIRITUAL CONVERSION. "Turn thou to thy God." An expression implying that their moral mind was in a different

direction, away from God. It was so with Ephraim, it was after idols; it is so with all unregenerate souls, they are alienated from God. Terrible fact this. God's intelligent creatures turned from Him and against Him. Turning to Him includes at least two things:—

First: Accepting Him as the supreme *Monarch to obey*. It means the making of His will the law of all their laws, the test of all their conduct, the guide of all their activities. Secondly: Accepting Him as the supreme *Object to love*. Man is so formed that he must have some one to love supremely. His crime, degradation, and curse are, that the objects which he has chosen on which to centre his paramount love are imperfect creatures and vanities. He

Gospel. God calls men everywhere to repent—that is, to change their hearts, turn from themselves to Him their Creator. Genuine human goodness includes—

II. SOCIAL MORALITY. "Keep mercy and judgment." Notice the latter first. First: "*Judgment*," that is, justice. Justice means rendering to every man his due, it is compendiously expressed in the words of Christ, "Whatsoever ye would have men do unto you, do ye even so to them." It goes dead against all frauds, dishonesties, and cruelties. Secondly: "*Mercy*." Mercy is a modification of love, it is love in compassion, patience, forbearance, &c. Paul makes a distinction between a good man and a just man. There are men conventionally just, who are not good, not generous, not merciful. They would pay every man his due, but, like Shylock, they will extort the last grain. It is not, therefore,

in tabernacles, as in the days of the solemn feast."—Hosea xii. 7, 8, 9.

Here we have—

I. Fortunes badly USED. "And Ephraim said, I am become rich, I have found me out substance. Here is a fortune held and no doubt employed in the spirit of haughty egotism. It is all *I*. 'I have become rich, I have found me out substance.'" First: Here there is no recognition of *human co-operation*. No man comes in possession of wealth without the efforts of some men either living or dead. Wealth, whoever holds it, is the result—in most, perhaps in all cases—of the efforts of a large number of human workers. But the possessor oftentimes takes no note of this. He thinks only of himself. He does not think of the toil, the sweat, the exhaustion of those who have helped to put it into his hand. Secondly: Here there is no recognition of *Divine agency*. All fortunes come of God. Out of His materials, out of His seasons, out of the activity of His creatures, but there is no recognition of Him here. "I have become rich, I have found me out substance." How many fortunes are thus held and employed in England this day held and employed in a *haughty egotism*. Here we have—

II. Fortunes badly MADE. First: Here is *fraud*. "He is a merchant, the balances of deceit are in his hand." The hand of fraud has ever been, and still is, alas! the most active of all agencies in the erection of fortunes. There is deceit everywhere. In all fabrics, groceries, trade commodities. Deceit in

making, deceit both in the buying and the selling. Were all the fortunes in England that have been built up by deceit, to be destroyed this day, the whole human world would be startled with the terrible crash. The event would be as the hurling of the Himalah into the sea, causing the billows to roar on every shore. Secondly: Here is *oppression*. "He loveth to oppress." Indeed, fraud is oppression in some form or other. What unrighteous exactions there are in the building of many fortunes! Go to the pits of mine-owners, to the factories of manufacturers, to the warehouses of merchants, to the vessels of shipowners, and everywhere you will meet men and women groaning under the oppression of those for whom they are building up fortunes. Thirdly: Here is *cunning*. "In all my labours they shall find none iniquity in me that were sin." Ephraim—this typical fortune-maker—took such care to conceal all that was unfair and nefarious in his operations that he was certain no wrong could be found in his doings. Wrong there was, he knew, but he was careful that none should discover it. By plausible and well-guarded statements, by legal *formulae*, by "Board" resolutions, he feels that he can say, "In all my labours they shall find none iniquity in me." Who has not seen many men of this type? Many who have made a fortune by a swindle, but have so guarded the transaction that they have clapped their hands and said, "None will ever find it out."

Here we have—

III. Fortunes badly ENDED. "And I, that am the Lord thy God from the land of Egypt, will yet make thee to dwell in tabernacles, as in the days of the solemn feast." The meaning of this is, Rich as thou art, I will strip thee of thy wealth, drive thee from thy home, send thee back again to the wilderness a vagrant, to howl for bread and water. Aye, aye, to all such fortune-holders and fortune-makers retribution must come sooner or later. "I tell thee," says Thomas Carlyle, "there is nothing else but justice: one strong thing I find here below—the just thing, the true thing. My friend, if thou hadst all the artillery of Woolwich marching at thy back in support of an unjust thing, and infinite bonfires visibly waiting ahead of thee to blaze centuries to come for thy victory on behalf of it, I would advise thee to call 'Halt!' to fling down thy baton, and say, 'In God's name, no!'" What will the success amount to? If the thing be unjust, thou hast not succeeded, though bonfires blaze from north to south, and bells rang and editors wrote leading articles, and the just thing be trampled out of sight to all mortal eyes, an abolished and an annihilated thing."

No. LII.

Subject: GOD'S METHOD IN
TEACHING THE GREAT
TEACHERS OF THE WORLD.

"I have also spoken by the prophets, and I have multiplied visions, and used similitudes, by the ministry of the prophets."—Hosea xii. 10.

God is the Great Teacher of mankind. "Who teaches like Him?" He teaches the best lessons, in the best way and for the best purpose; He teaches man through the works of nature, and through the best of men. God has always employed prophets in His great school for humanity. Into every age He has sent men above the average of the race, men gifted with high intellect, lofty genius, and special inspiration. They are evermore His prophets, and these He Himself teaches; they are in his "normal school," He teaches them that they may teach others. The text indicates His method of teaching them.

I. By VISIONS. He gives to those men inner revelations, unfolds to them spiritual realities, opens their spiritual eyes, and bids them look. What wonderful visions Isaiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, Paul, and the Apostle John had! They saw wonderful things; but what they saw was not with the outward eye, but with the eye of the soul. These visions serve to show three things. First: *The distinguishing glory of the human mind.* What is that? It is a power to see the sensuously invisible, the universe that lies beyond the ken of mortal sight. What a universe came to the eye of the sightless bard of England. In some this visual organ is keener and more active than in others. He who has it in the highest extent is the poet, the prophet, emphatically the seer. Secondly: *The accessibility of the human mind to God.* Man can only address the mind through the senses,

the Almighty can do it when all the senses are closed up, in the "visions of the night." He can take into it at His pleasure a whole universe, and bid it gaze on its objects and listen to its sounds. It serves to show, thirdly: The reality of *spiritual things*. The bodily eye does not see realities, but mere forms and shadows. The soul alone can see the real, hence God brings the real into it. By visions, I think the Almighty has ever taught the great thinkers of mankind, not only in ancient but in modern times. All the true discoveries of men of science, all the creations of sacred bards, all the flashes of the true evangel, are but visions from God. "In visions of the night."

II. By *SIMILITUDE*. "And used similitudes." By this is meant, He showed them the invisible by the visible, the spiritual by the sensuous. He gave them parables. "Without a parable spake he not unto them." Hence the prophets spoke in parables, and the Great

Prophet of the world, who was like unto Moses. There are good reasons for this mode of teaching spiritual truth. Two may be mentioned. First: It makes the *spiritual more attractive*. All men, whether they will or not, from their very bodily constitutions, are vitally interested in material objects. They live in them and by them; and without direct impressions from God, we can scarcely conceive of spiritual truth being made clear to them but by their means. Secondly: It makes the *material appear more divine*. Flowers, trees, streams, and stars, when they have become emblems to the soul of spiritual truth, become invested with a mystic charm. The picture that has hung in your room for years, and on which your eyes have rested a thousand times, becomes invested with a strange fascination after you have made the acquaintance and come to love the person whom it represents. Thank God for His parabolic method of teaching.

Homiletical Breviaries.

No. XCIII.

Subject: THE FASTENING HOLD OF CHRIST.

"I will fasten him as a nail in a sure place."—Isa. xxii. 23.

The words refer primarily to Eliakim; but they may fairly be applied to Christ, because they strikingly represent His fastening grip upon human souls. The word "nail" here does not stand for exactly the same thing as with us: it here represents pegs or spikes. They were large nails, with square heads like dice; they

were well made, the heads being so bent as to make them cramp irons, so that once let into the wood or timber, they could not easily be extracted. The fastening force of Christ upon the soul of humanity is seen: I. In His hold upon the **GENERAL MIND OF THE WORLD**. Who, throughout the history of the ages, have laid such a firm grip upon mankind as Christ has? It is true that Buddha, Zoroaster, Confucius, Mahomet, have had—and still have—a firm hold on millions of souls. Some of them have a far wider influence than that of Christ, but they are not *fastened so firmly*. First: *Philosophy* shows this. Their systems—if systems they can be called—only appeal to certain faculties in human nature; Christ grasps the *entire* man—intellect, imagination, conscience, hope, fear, love. Secondly: *History* shows this. Heathenism does not encroach upon Christianity. Christians are not converted to Zoroaster, Confucius, &c., but their followers are converted to Christianity every day. Heathendom is contracting, Christendom is extending on all hands. Its language, its literature, its institutions, are pushing themselves everywhere.

Christ, then, has fastened Himself upon the general mind of the world. The “nail” is made so fast, that to extract it would be to tear the world to pieces. II. In His hold upon the **CONSECRATED MIND OF HIS DISCIPLES**. His hold here is far firmer than His hold on the general mind. He goes deeper into humanity, He takes hold of the *entire* soul, and makes it captive. Or, to change the figure, He strikes His roots into every faculty of the soul. He becomes to the human spirit in this case what the sap is to the tree. You must tear the soul to pieces—nay, you must annihilate it—before you can extract this “nail.” A remarkable fact was told me illustrative of this by an old friend now in his heavenly rest, the Rev. William Roaf, of Wigan. He said the late Rev. Mr. Slattery, of Chatham, had in his last years so far lost his memory, that he knew none of his own old familiar friends. One day the Rev. John Leifchild, of London, who had been a fellow-student with him, and an old and intimate friend for upwards of forty years, paid him a visit. On speaking to him, the old man said, “Who are you? I don’t know you.” “Don’t know me!” said John Leifchild. “Surely you have not forgotten me?” “Yes,” said the old man “I don’t know you.” “Well,” said Mr. Leifchild, “do you know Jesus?” Whereupon the old man, as if struck with inspiration, exclaimed:—

"Jesus my Lord, I know His name,
His name is all my trust ;
He will not put my soul to shame,
Nor let my hope be lost."

No. XCIV.

Subject : SOUL-FEEDING.

"Thy words were found, and I did eat them, and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart."—Jer. xv. 16.

The human soul cannot live upon itself, it must take into it and appropriate something from without ; and what is that something ? The thoughts of the Infinite. Notice here three things : I. THE GRANDEST DISCOVERY. "Thy words were found." God's words. First : Explain the *universe*. All the objects in creation are the effects and the forms of His Word. The man of science that cannot find God's Word in the subject of his investigation lacks the key of the true interpreter. God's words, Secondly : Reveal *Himself*. They are the faithful expressions of His own thoughts, feelings, and purposes. God's words, Thirdly : Reveal His *redemptive provisions*. They are a history of the Redeemer and His redemptive appliances. What discoveries are to be compared with the discovery of God's words ? Notice : II. THE RICHEST REPAST. "I did eat them." This means, I took them into me as a hungry man, and appropriated them. The words of God are to the soul what material food is to the body. They do two things. First : They *satisfy the cravings of hunger*. Soul hunger is the worst hunger, and nothing can satisfy it but the words of God. It is written, "Man cannot live by bread alone." Secondly : They *invigorate the soul*. Unregenerate souls are destitute of true power—power to resist the wrong and do the right. Nothing but God's words can make the soul powerful, raise it above the world, make it heroic and all-triumphant. Truly His words are the soul's food. Come to the banquet, ye faint and hungry ones. Notice : III. THE SUBLIMEST DELIGHTS. "Thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart." When the words of God, as revealed in the life, the teachings, sufferings, atonement, and love of Christ, are taken into the soul and appropriated, they produce ineffable delight. They turn the desert of the soul into a Paradise ; its night into noonday ; its winter into summer. They fill it with joy unspeakable and full of glory.

the devil to God—is *cheap*. It is
MEANS OF MORAL REDEMPTION OF
Christ for nothing, He has given
Bible for nothing. (3) You have
man can excuse himself for his moral
he is too poor to obtain the moral
LABOUR INVOLVES NO SACRIFICE.
labour if he would be free, there is
spective of individual effort. Every
heartly strokes ere his chains can
there is no effort involving secular
a man pursuing his ordinary avocation
his freedom as well, if not better
plying his handicraft, pursuing his
chamber on his knees. III. THE
MORAL PROSPERITY. Seek ye first
righteousness, and all these things shall
liness is profitable unto all things
which now is, and of that which is

No. XC

Subject: THE DEATH

“The righteous perisheth, and no man
men are taken away, none considering

tabernacle rots, dust returns to dust. The bodies of all the millions of men in all the generations that have passed have perished. The greatest share the same fate. (1) Why then pamper the body? (2) Why centre interests on the wants and enjoyments of the body. II. Their death is **GENERALLY DISREGARDED BY mankind.** "No man layeth it to heart." How soon the best of men are forgotten. The death of the best, the most prominent and holy man of the age, is only as the falling of a stone into a river. There is a momentary agitation in a limited circle, but the deep stream of life rolls on, and every impression is borne away. There are two reasons for disregarding the death of the good. (1) The thought of death is repugnant to the heart. (2) The concerns of life are all-absorbing. III. Their death is a deliverance **FROM ALL THE EVILS THAT ARE COMING ON THE WORLD.** "Taken away from the evil to come." What evils there have been on this earth, what evils are still to come. What boisterous oceans of agony are yet to surge over this planet? The dead are secure from it, the righteous are delivered from it. The mightiest thunders here will awaken no ripple upon their placid souls. IV. Their **DEATH IS A STEP INTO A HIGHER LIFE.** "He shall enter into peace: they shall rest in their beds." (1) Their bodies sleep, "Shall rest in their beds." The death of the good as to the body is only sleep—*natural, refreshing, temporary.* (2) Their souls march on. "Each one walking in his uprightness." Endless progress. "It doth not yet appear what we shall be."

Literary Notices.

[We hold it to be the duty of an Editor either to give an early notice of the books sent to him for remark, or to return them at once to the Publisher. It is unjust to praise worthless books; it is robbery to retain unnoticed ones.]

THE REVIEWER'S CANON.

In every work regard the author's end,
Since none can compass more than they intend.

A HISTORY OF CRIME IN ENGLAND. By **LUKE OWEN PIKE, M.A.,**
Barrister-at-Law. Vol. I. London: Smith, Elder & Co., 15,
Waterloo Place.

THE author of this noble volume truly says in his Introduction, that in writing a history of crime, a field is entered which has never been pre-



for its own sake, and appraised connected facts with which it errs in an opposite direction omits the causes, has been in which generalises upon causes is a great whole, made up of which can be found who will be content with some minuteness, its proportion. It is surely a paradox that there is a 'History' and not one 'History' maintained at different times of its existence shown for human life and for its constitution upon the nature and the tendencies for their repression, the social disorganisation, belong to these, and a variety of minor causes have hitherto been passed over in sentences, which might be taken to contain certain information. An Oath of disgrace to humanity, a Bacon sinning; but none have set the example off past had aided in the development have now been modified, and they themselves transmit any of them to

Truly, as the learned author explored field, but a field of its practical significance. This view

should be studied not only by jurists and politicians, but especially by ministers of the Gospel, who have to do with the fountain from which all crimes flow—the human heart.

LIBERTY, EQUALITY, AND FRATERNITY. By JAMES FITZJAMES STEPHEN, Q.C. London : Smith, Elder, and Co.

THIS is another volume written by one of our ablest lawyers on a subject of general interest. "The object of this work," says the author, "is to examine the doctrines which are rather hinted at than expressed by the phrase 'Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity.' This phrase has been the motto of more than one Republic. It is indeed something more than a motto. It is the creed of a religion less definite than any one of the forms of Christianity which are in part its rivals, in part its antagonists, and in part its associates, but not on that account the less powerful. It is, on the contrary, one of the most penetrating influences of the day. It shows itself now and then in different forms, of which Positivism is the one best known to our generation, but its special manifestations give no adequate measure of its depth or width. It penetrates other creeds. It has often transformed Christianity into a system of optimism, which has in some cases retained, and in others rejected, Christian phraseology. It deeply influences politics and legislation. It has its solemn festivals, its sober adherents, its enthusiasts, its anabaptists and antinomians. The religion of humanity is perhaps as good a name as could be found for it, if the expression is used in a wider sense than the narrow and technical one associated with it by Comte. It is one of the commonest beliefs of the day that the human race collectively has before it splendid destinies of various kinds, and that the road to them is to be found in the removal of all restraints on human conduct in the recognition of a substantial equality between all human creatures, and in fraternity or general love. These doctrines are in very many cases held as a religious faith. They are regarded not merely as truths, but as truths for which those who believe in them are ready to do battle, and for the establishment of which they are prepared to sacrifice all merely personal ends. Such—stated of course in most general terms—is the religion of which I take 'Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity,' to be the creed. I do not believe it for the following reasons : I am not the advocate of slavery, caste, and hatred, nor do I deny that a sense may be given to the words, 'Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity,' in which they may be regarded as good." The character of the work and the well-known ability of the author will secure for it an introduction into the libraries of most of the thoughtful readers in England.

For lack of space the following works must remain over for notice until next month :—

THE BIBLICAL COMMENTARY ON JEREMIAH. Vol. I. By C. F. KIEL, D.D.
CHRISTIAN ETHICS. By H. MARTENSEN, D.D.

CRITICAL AND EXEGETICAL HANDBOOK TO THE EPISTLE OF GALATIANS. By HEINRICH MEYER, TH.D. Vols. I. and II. T. and T. Clark, Edinburgh.

AT NIGHTFALL AND MIDNIGHT. By FRANCIS JACOX. London : Hodder and Stoughton.

THE BIBLE EDUCATOR. Edited by Rev. E. H. PLUMPTRE, M.A. Vol. I. London : Cassell, Petter, and Galpin.

A BOOK OF MARVELS. By Rev. W. ANTLIFFE, D.D. London : G. Lamb. APOSTOLIC TIMES AND THEIR LESSONS. By Rev. C. H. RAMSDEN, M.A. Vol. I. London : Hatchards.

EVERLASTING DESTRUCTION. By J. H. Bell. London : John Shaw and Co. JOHN BUNYAN : AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY. London : Religious Tract Society.

THE MYSTERY OF THE BURNING BUSH, AND OTHER SERMONS. By T. M. MORRIS. London : Elliot Stock. THE ODD FIVE MINUTES. By Rev. F. BOURDILLON, M.A. London : Religious Tract Society. THE PARABLE OF THE PRODIGAL SON. By Rev. FERGUS FERGUSON, M.A. London : Hamilton, Adams, and Co. JANET DARNEY. By SARAH DOUDNEY. London : Religious Tract Society.

- MORAL DIFFICULTIES CONNECTED WITH THE BIBLE. By JAMES AUGUSTUS HESSEY, D.C.L. London : Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge. THE DIVINE GLORY OF CHRIST. By Rev. CHARLES BROWN, D.D. London : Religious Tract Society.

HOMILIST.

Notice.—The next volume of the HOMILIST will contain, in addition to the various sections of the present one, (1) A continuation of the articles on THE CHRISTIANITY OF SHAKESPEARE, (2) SEEDS OF SERMONS ON THE BOOK OF JOEL, (3) A new section, entitled THE PREACHER'S CONFIDENTIAL COUNCIL ROOM. There arise in the pulpit and pastoral experience of almost every minister certain questions of casuistry and doctrine which he would not care to have opened in a *general journal*, but upon which he would like the judgment of his brethren. This department will be available to such. Ministers of all denominations are invited to it.

The following notice, testifying to the Catholicity of the HOMILIST, has just appeared :—"Very few names are better known to us through his works than that of Dr. David Thomas. And perhaps it would be difficult to mention two authors who, during the last quarter of a century, have influenced so much the pulpits of Great Britain and America, and indeed every country where the English language is spoken, as the late Robertson of Brighton and Dr. Thomas of Stockwell. These two in their works are a kind of public property of all denominations, alike conformists as well as nonconformists. You can generally tell, when you see a volume of any author's works on a table, to what denomination the family belongs ; but when you see Robertson's Sermons, or any of Dr. Thomas's works, you have not the slightest clue as to what denomination the family belongs, whether they are cons or noncons. The productions of the Churchman from Brighton are read with delight by Dissenters ; and, on the other hand, the Dissenter from Stockwell is read and studied with pleasure by Churchmen."—*The Banner*.











